

# Policy Advocacy in Peacebuilding



A resource pack on the nexus between  
advocacy and peacebuilding  
from LPI's Horn of Africa Regional  
Programme







# Policy Advocacy in Peacebuilding

Life & Peace Institute, Horn of Africa Regional Programme

## Policy Advocacy in Peacebuilding

Life & Peace Institute, Horn of Africa Regional Programme

Addis Ababa, 2017

Compiled by: Lidet Shiferaw Tadesse

The publication draws on valuable contributions from participants in a series of LPI-arranged workshops and additional sources. The content has been reviewed and improved by a number of LPI colleagues. Kristina Lundqvist has been of great help as a line editor.

The photos on the cover pages are from various peacebuilding work by LPI and local partners, and particularly from the series of workshops on Advocacy for Peacebuilding arranged by LPI's Horn of Africa Regional Programme.

[www.life-peace.org](http://www.life-peace.org)



# Policy Advocacy in Peacebuilding

## Introduction: Purpose, scope and limitations of this resource pack

This tool kit was first developed as an effort within the Life & Peace Institute (LPI) to strengthen the capacity of LPI's country programmes and their staff in policy advocacy so as to enhance the organisation's use of advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy.

Considering that LPI, which is a peacebuilding organisation with extensive experience in grassroots peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa (HoA) and the Great Lakes region, was just stepping into advocacy as a peacebuilding approach, it was imperative that the team and partners understood the technical and practical aspects of advocacy in general and how it relates to conflict transformation in particular.

In an effort to develop a practical training for country programme staff on policy advocacy in peacebuilding, there was a realisation that unlike the abundant resources on advocacy in development or human rights, the use of advocacy in peacebuilding was less documented. LPI is aware that a lot of organisations at different levels – from international to national and local – engage in advocacy in one form or another. However, this knowledge and possible lessons learned are not systematically organised and disseminated for the benefit of peacebuilders.

In light of this fact, LPI decided to explore the theoretical and practical nexus between advocacy and peacebuilding and how advocacy could be used to address immediate as well as structural peacebuilding challenges. While LPI does not think this resource pack is the silver bullet that outlines how to use advocacy as a peacebuilding tool, LPI hopes it will be resourceful to organisations engaged or wishing to engage in peacebuilding advocacy. This resource pack should therefore be seen as LPI's humble way of striking a conversation on the advocacy-peacebuilding nexus.

That said, the purpose of the toolkit is to introduce peacebuilders to the theories and tools behind advocacy and how they can be utilised to complement peacebuilding efforts. While the contents of this resource pack have been presented to and tested by peacebuilding civil society organisations in the HoA through workshops, its efforts to also document peacebuilding advocacy efforts from the region and include in this resource pack were rather hampered by the lack of documentation of cases and activities prevalent in most organisations. There are a few case studies presented in the resource pack, but readers might feel that some of the content could still benefit from practical case studies that could ground the points to reality. LPI recognises this as one of the major limitations of the resource pack and wishes to encourage likeminded organisations to continue the conversation on the use of advocacy for peacebuilding, to share challenges and experiences for shared learning and joint development of the field.

Similarly, peacebuilders that work in contexts where public institutes are weak or dysfunctional might feel that the content of the resource pack is far from their reality. This is indeed a legitimate concern and LPI also recognises that the resource pack might be more useful for organisations that work in reasonably functioning institutions. However, peacebuilding organisations that work in unstable situations, including in Somalia and South Sudan, have also noted that understanding advocacy processes in contexts of formal policy environments was helpful in drawing comparisons and providing ideas for adaptation to their own context.

*Hannah Tsadik, Resident Representative*

# Table of Contents

<b>Section I: What is advocacy .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>A. Defining advocacy.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>B. Elements of advocacy .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Section II: Advocacy in peacebuilding .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>A. Advocacy vs conflict transformation: historical tensions and current thinking .....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>B. The case for advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>C. The advocacy – peacebuilding nexus .....</b>	<b>14</b>
1. Levels and dimensions of conflict .....	13
2. Dimensions of advocacy in conflict transformation .....	15
<b>D. Challenges in peacebuilding advocacy .....</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Section III: Designing peacebuilding advocacy strategies .</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>A. Peacebuilding advocacy: organisational positioning .....</b>	<b>23</b>
1. Theories about how change happens.....	23
2. Policy influencing approaches .....	25
<b>B. The advocacy process and peacebuilding advocacy programming .....</b>	<b>27</b>
1. The advocacy cycle and tools .....	27
<b>Section IV: Conclusion and wrap-up .....</b>	<b>53</b>

## Section I: What is advocacy?

---

This section is about exploring what advocacy is about. If the resource pack is used to facilitate a workshop on peacebuilding advocacy, the discussion in this section can help participants share their thoughts on and experiences of advocacy. Below are four guiding questions to lead a discussion among the workshop participants:

- What does advocacy mean to you?
- What would you say are three outcomes of advocacy?
- What kind of activities does advocacy involve?
- What are your advocacy related experiences?

Depending on the experience of participants, this might be a discussion that would allow the facilitator to draw some baselines on where participants are in terms of their knowledge and experience on the issue. If the purpose of the workshop is to come up with an advocacy strategy on a specific issue, however, the facilitator or the participants may not want to dwell on this for long, in the interest of time.

### A. Defining advocacy

- Strategic and deliberate action directed at changing or influencing a given policy, position, system etc
- Defending an idea, promoting a position, raising awareness
- Policy advocacy is the process of negotiating and mediating a dialogue through which influential networks, opinion leaders, and, ultimately, decision makers take ownership of your ideas, evidence<sup>1</sup>, and proposals, and subsequently act upon them

### B. Elements of advocacy

Similar to the characteristics, most advocacy projects give due consideration to the following:

- **Evaluation:** Once the advocacy project is carried out, it needs to be evaluated to assess the successes and challenges of the project itself – its activities towards implementation. The advocacy project should also be evaluated in light of its ultimate objectives and the challenges and successes it faced towards achieving its expected results. The evaluation process should also attempt to interrogate and understand not only expected but also unexpected and unintended outcomes of the advocacy activity.
- **Fundraising:** Financial resources are important for any project, not less for advocacy. Hence, most advocacy projects have a fundraising component. What can make fundraising for peacebuilding advocacy different and where care should be taken, is in

---

<sup>1</sup> Eóin, Y. & Quinn, L. (2012). *Making Research Evidence Matter. A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries*. Open Society Foundation, p. 26.

mitigating the risk associated with (im)partiality. This is especially important when advocating on socially or political sensitive issues, lest the policy message be attributed to the source of the funding (and the political/institutional interests associated with the funder) rather than the merit of the message itself.

- **Building support/coalition:** In most advocacy projects, building coalitions and forming partnerships is key for many reasons, including adding weight to the policy message, sharing of resources (financial, technical capacity and thematic expertise) as well as capitalising on the different points of leverage attached to each member organisation.



---

**Figure 1: The basic elements of advocacy<sup>2</sup>**

---

<sup>2</sup> Adopted from Sharma, R. R. The basic elements of advocacy, in *An Introduction to Advocacy. Training Guide*, p 5. USAID.



## Section II: Advocacy in peacebuilding

---

Peacebuilding advocacy is the use of advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy. While advocacy is not to be seen as a substitute for peacebuilding, it is a strategy for peacebuilding that is well suited for addressing social, political and structural conflicts in an environment where there is power asymmetry (where there is a distinction between the power haves and the power have nots).

Peacebuilding advocacy is different from other types of advocacy for the following two reasons:

- **Peace first:** Peacebuilding advocacy sees peace as the end goal, that is, we are not advocating for the sake of advocating but because we feel the advocacy is an important component of achieving peace. A good illustration of this point is the difference between peacebuilding advocacy and human right advocacy for example. While human rights advocacy would advocate for ‘rights’ at all costs, peacebuilding advocacy would call for a more comprehensive approach to the call for rights and justice and question the timing, actors, framing etc of an advocacy to makes sure the pursuit of justice does not undermine the pursuit of peace.
- **Principled process:** In peacebuilding advocacy, the advocacy process is as important as the outcome of the process. For example, if the intended outcome of a given advocacy project is to get a bill passed, a result-oriented advocacy project would just focus on getting the bill passed and would use all means available to achieve that end. In peacebuilding advocacy, however, one would have to ask if the process of drafting the bill is inclusive, has the ownership of the primary stakeholders or beneficiaries etc – which are fundamental peacebuilding principles. In other words, in peacebuilding advocacy, the end does not justify the means (that is, peacebuilding advocacy would not use approaches that could disempower people who are affected by the bill, with the intent of passing the bill in the most ‘efficient’ and ‘strategic’ way.

### A. Advocacy vs. conflict transformation: historical tensions and current thinking

While advocacy has been widely used as a tool for raising awareness, gaining the political will of decision makers and calling for action in the fields of development and rights based movements (human rights, gender rights, democratic rights etc.), it has not been as widely used in peacebuilding (peacebuilding as a transdisciplinary field that is holistic in its approach).

While this is not necessarily unique to the HoA region, according to a mapping conducted by LPI in 2013, civil society organisations (CSOs) in the Horn, particularly those working at the grassroots level, shy away from engaging in advocacy beyond their local administrative districts<sup>3</sup>. The reasons for this were numerous: the relative novelty of conflict transformation as a discipline (beyond conflict resolution), the political nature of most conflicts, making advocacy risky, peace builders’ reluctance to engage in advocacy for fear of the risks, lack of know-how

---

<sup>3</sup> Cussen, S., Tadesse Shiferaw, L. et al (2014). *Civil Society and Regional Peacebuilding in the Horn of Africa*. Life & Peace Institute.

and capacity in carrying out advocacy as a peacebuilding tool, as well as the perception that advocacy conflicts with peacebuilding.

Nonetheless, beyond these practical limitations, the reluctance to use advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy has fundamental and historical explanations. This sub-section therefore aims to outline some of these reasons, while the next sub-section will make a case for why advocacy needs to be better and more utilised for peacebuilding purposes.

### **1. Advocacy as an inherently partisan and political undertaking**

For much of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the word advocacy was used primarily in legal studies and praxis. The word ‘advocate’ could still mean a lawyer in British English. As a result of the linguistic essence of the word advocacy, most peacebuilders associated advocacy with litigation.

While this changed tremendously in the 1980s and 1990s, when civil society activism flourished globally in general and in Africa in particular, the fact that several organisations were standing for a given cause and were externally funded gave the impression that advocacy based CSOs are partisan and instruments of various international interest groups.

As a result of this sentiment against CSOs, governments in the HoA see CSOs as externally funded counterparts, while CSOs question the legitimacy of governments in the region, most of whom came to power in undemocratic transitions of power. The relationship between CSOs and governments in the HoA is therefore fraught with tensions and is founded on mutual suspicion.

However, the suspicion projected towards CSOs does not emanate from governments only. The general public in the region has also seen one too many CSOs engage in activism in support of certain ideologies and political parties.

In consideration of this context, most peacebuilding organisations (as opposed to rights based organisations) that are driven by principles of inclusivity, impartiality and non-partisanship avoid to boldly announce that they engage in advocacy – even when they do carry out activities that could be deemed advocacy. This was clearly reflected in workshops LPI conducted with peacebuilding CSOs in the region, who described ‘advocacy’ as a rather politically sensitive engagement, which they and the organisations they come from try to avoid. Interestingly, however, when asked about the activities and strategies they use for peacebuilding, most of them mentioned activities and techniques that are very well a form of advocacy. In fact, after the definition of advocacy was given and its special added value in peacebuilding highlighted in the workshop, most of them openly admitted their reliance on advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy.

### **2. Narrow understanding of power as inherently corrupt**

There is a general sense among civil society that power is inherently corrupt, and the closer one gets to power, the more one can co-opt. While this sentiment is shared in other regions, it is prevalent in Africa in general and in the HoA in particular, as political clientelism, abuse of power and corruption are pervasive and the public’s confidence on the state and its institutions are low.

Regardless of the reality and the validity of these concerns, the impact one can have when one has power or access to those in power cannot be denied. The American Civil Rights movement leader Martin Luther King Jr., for example, was a social justice activist and icon who argued that a movement needs power to challenge power. As he said it, “Power without love is reckless and

abusive and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice, and justice at its best is power correcting everything that stands against love.”

The trick therefore is to know how to balance the ideal with the reality and power with the positive application of it.

In the ‘Action guide for advocacy and citizen participation’<sup>4</sup>, the authors highlight four distinct types of power:

- **Power over:** This is the most recognised form of power and a form that a lot of activists and communities fight against. The expression of ‘power over’ comes in terms of repression, coercion, discrimination, etc, where those in control of power and resources (politically but also socially due to gender roles, age differences, ethnicity, legacy, etc) use it *over* those that do not have these powers and privileges.
- **Power with:** This type of power “has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength”<sup>5</sup>. ‘Power with’ is different actors putting together their principles, convictions and capabilities to act.
- **Power to:** This is the power or the agency of each individual to make decisions about their lives. At the individual level, the ‘power to’ of every individual can be combined to create the ‘power with. It is the potential in every person (realised or not).
- **Power within:** ‘Power within’ “is the capacity to imagine and have hope; it affirms the common human search for dignity and fulfillment”<sup>6</sup>.

## **B. The case for advocacy as a peacebuilding strategy**

Given the understanding of peace as positive peace (not only the absence of violence but also the promotion of harmonious and just relationships), peacebuilding is a task that requires transforming physical, structural and cultural violence. Advocacy and policy engagement, in which peacebuilders call for changes in policy, attitude, laws and procedures, are, therefore, strategies that can lend themselves to effecting change particularly at the structural and cultural levels.

Plus, for peacebuilding to be effective, it should be multi-level and multi-sectoral. While bottom up peacebuilding is crucial and the engagement of those who are directly affected by conflict is essential in conflict transformation, their participation alone may not translate into the change needed in the long term. Rather, their participation and input should be targeted, and it should reflect on what should be done, not only by the communities themselves, but also by the decision makers. The conflict analysis should consider the different levels and dimensions of the situation beyond the immediate actors and factors. It should analyse to find the policy or structural level causes and effects of the conflict at hand.

---

<sup>4</sup> VeneKlasen, L. & Miller, V. (2002, rev 2007)). *A New Weave of Power, People & Politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Chapter 3, Power and empowerment. Practical Action Publ.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid

<sup>6</sup> Ibid

Further, beyond the analysis, the lessons learned from peacebuilding on the ground or other levels should be translated to legal, policy or social attitudes in order to effect sustainable change. When as peacebuilders we fail to echo our experiences and lessons to the right actors, especially decision makers, our peacebuilding work on the ground could also be jeopardised by decisions that are based on ill informed or incomplete analysis, or decisions that are detached from needs and perspectives of the people and groups that are directly affected by the decision. Such decisions, which might otherwise have been influenced by our advocacy, would then reinforce the structural disparity and inequity between actors. In short, why we need advocacy as a peacebuilding tool is summarised below:

- **Change inevitably can go in different directions**

If we don't call for policy changes that can further peace and our peacebuilding work, decisions that are based on partial or ill-informed analysis can be made and have a detrimental effect on our peacebuilding work.

- **Advocacy has a multiplier effect**

Advocacy allows us to address structural issues through policy change or attitudinal change (be it of policy makers or the general public), which will promote peace at other levels as well. When we succeed in changing policies, structures and frameworks, we are creating enabling environments for other changes to take place as a result. For example, educating women is educating a society as a whole.

### **Kenya Peace Policy – the experiences of PeaceNet Kenya**

#### **THE NATIONAL POLICY ON PEACE BUILDING AND CONFLICT MANAGEMENT: A CASE OF KENYA**

Local conflicts are not uncommon in Kenya. Despite many efforts by the government to stem these conflicts around the country, there is still a lot of work to be done to build harmonious societies. CSOs like PeaceNet Kenya on their part have generated great initiatives, such as setting up of District Peace Committees to manage conflicts e.g. at the local level. These committees were later adopted by the government as part of their structure.

In 2001 a project called *Arid Districts Conflict Reduction project* was designed and implemented jointly by (DFID, Oxfam GB, ALRMP, and Office of the President) – a delicately sensitive process where for the first time government and CSO jointly worked on a peace project. This collaboration led to the setting up of a multi-stakeholder national committee called the National Steering Committee on Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (NSC)<sup>7</sup>. The NSC consisted of local CSOs, INGOs, religious institutions and various government Ministries and departments.

The development of the peace policy started in 2004, inspired by the lack of a national policy

---

<sup>7</sup> Members of the NSC ranged from local CSOs, International NGOs, Government departments including Attorney General's Office, Arid Lands Reclamation and Management Programme under Office of the President, Kenya National Focal Point on Small Arms, Religious Institutions such as National Council of Churches of Kenya, Supreme Council of Kenya Muslims among others.



to guide effective conflict management and peace building in Kenya. With the leadership of the NSC several drafts were produced through consultative and interactive processes, capturing the needs and recommendations of key stakeholders. Adjustments were also made on the draft policy following the promulgation of the Constitution in 2010 to reflect the changes in the devolved government structure. In 2014 the National Policy on Peace Building and Conflict Management was tabled in Parliament as Sessional Paper No. 5 of 2014

Several consultative meetings, validation sessions later, the final push was made in 2015 with the leadership of PeaceNet Kenya, SaferWorld, Directorate of Peacebuilding and Conflict Management (formerly NSC) and a group of CSOs working under the ambit of Kenya Peace Conference with support from Coffey International. These network of CSO actors pushing for the adoption of the Sessional paper strategised and decided to target individual MPs and the Parliamentary Committee on Administration and National Security which is charged with the responsibility of making recommendations and tabling the sessional paper in Parliament.

A breakfast meeting targeting the members of the Parliamentary Committee on Administration and National Security provided peace practitioners an opportunity to lobby for the Sessional Paper by highlighting its importance in enhancing peaceful coexistence in Kenya through better coordination of peace initiatives & allocation of resources for peace building programmes by government etc. The breakfast meeting was very effective as it enabled the members of the parliamentary committee to interact with peace actors, having their queries answered. This led to the tabling of the sessional paper in Parliament and its adoption on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015 making Kenya's national peace policy a living document. This process has led to the development of the National Peace Council Bill currently ongoing. Kenya's peace policy does not only mean a better collaborative relationship between government and CSOs but it will also entail allocation of public funds to peacebuilding efforts including building of local level capacities for conflict prevention, reconciliation, community dialogue and a variety of rapid response actions.

- **Drawing attention to “forgotten conflicts”**

When attention to and funding for conflicts in some regions decrease, advocacy is one way to put it back on the agenda. In the HoA, often characterised as a conflict system, “forgotten conflicts” are still likely to play into the dynamics of the system and hence need to be paid attention to.

A recent example could be the ‘Kony 2012’ video that went viral in March 2012. Despite the critiques and controversy the video was met with, from the advocacy perspective, it shows how an advocacy campaign brought to light the violence caused by the Lord's Resistance Army (LRA) in Northern Uganda and the region, to the attention of general global public and decision makers. Although other initiatives by international organisations, the US government and the African Union were already underway, the video did bring back the LRA to the policy agenda and spike a global conversation on it at a time where the statehood of South Sudan, border dispute between North and South Sudan, the “Arab Spring”, etc were on the global agenda.

### **LPI Sudan case study: drawing attention to ‘forgotten conflicts’**

After the independence of South Sudan in 2011, most international donors began diverting their assistance to South Sudan, to help rebuild the youngest nation in the world. While attention on South Sudan was a much needed move to establish the structures needed for the new state to flourish, many international donors and governments were doing so by withdrawing their support to Sudan. LPI, as well as a number of other organisations focusing on Sudan, considered this approach short-sighted, as peace and conflict issues within and between the two countries are intricately linked, with instability in one country affecting stability in the other.

In recognition of this reality, LPI decided to pursue its peacebuilding engagement in Sudan and also draw international attention to the continued peacebuilding needs in the country. In order to draw attention to the dangers of a complete neglect, LPI understood that there needs to be a policy engagement with donors to influence their commitment to Sudan and national governments to influence their foreign policies and strategies towards Sudan.

As an international organisation with headquarters in Sweden, LPI in collaboration with its Sudanese partners decided to ‘start at home’, by influencing the Swedish government at a time when it lacked a strategy for Sudan for 2012-2014.

LPI then collaborated with the Nordic Africa Institute and the Swedish Sudan network that included, among others, the Church of Sweden, Save the Children, International Aid Services and Operation 1325. The network, under LPI’s lead, held a series of high-level seminars, where Sudanese academics and international experts were invited to speak on the environment and conflict, Sudan-South Sudan border, the role of civil society in Sudan and the role of the Nordic countries in Sudan. The last seminar in the series took place in the Swedish Parliament and all four seminars were attended by the Sudanese embassy in Sweden.

In addition to working with individual parliamentarians, the network wrote a letter to the Swedish Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) and held a follow-up meeting with the Ministry in order to brief officers on local conflict dynamics in Sudan and how and why the Ministry should continue to engage in Sudan. LPI also collaborated with champions such as the then Swedish Ambassador to Sudan, who could justify why Swedish diplomatic and development assistance to Sudan should be sustained. Further, LPI used communication tools and wrote an open letter in a major digital platform called Biståndsdebatten.se and got coverage on Swedish National radio (Ekot and Studio Ett).

On 30 January, 2014, the MFA finally released the Sudan Results Strategy for 2014-2016, which also enabled the Swedish International Development Agency (Sida) to continue funding development activities in Sudan, and also support civil society organisations in Sudan.

- **Amplifying unrepresented/suppressed/silenced narratives**

Most conflict settings are characterised by suppressed or silenced narratives. In fact, lack of recognition of identity or a group’s demands and deep rooted marginalisation are known to cause conflict. These are the cultural or structural divides that conflict transformation seeks to bridge through inclusion and creating space for dialogue and expression. While inclusivity is one of the

pillars of conflict transformation, advocacy is one way of creating this inclusion, where the voices of the unrepresented, suppressed or silenced groups are further amplified, to ensure they are taken into consideration in the policy making process – for exclusion can encourage the formation of “spoilers”.

### **Bringing Somalia’s marginalised clans to the table: LPI Somalia’s experience**

International peacebuilding intervention in south central Somalia has primarily been focused on national stabilisation and statebuilding. Following this objective, a significant amount of attention and resources have been channelled towards supporting Somali political elites on the one hand and communities by way of humanitarian aid and socio-economic development on the other. Despite the significant amount of financial and technical assistance that has been poured into the country, south central Somalia continues to face substantial obstacles in the nation’s quest for peace and stability.

In recent years, there has also been a considerable international and local effort to engage clan elders in peacebuilding. While the role of clan elders in Somalia is undeniable, their sphere of influence and legitimacy seldom goes beyond their own clans. As clan elders represent the interests of their own clans (although there are times when they do mediate a conflict outside of their immediate clan dynamic) and traditionally engage in reactive conflict resolution, such as mediation and reconciliation, there has been no entity that deals with inter-clan conflict resolution as well as long-term, proactive conflict transformation processes. Considering the multi-dimensional nature of conflict in Somalia, and the main effort focused on the wider conflict between the government and al-Shabab, the lack of a mechanism that can engage various communities in transforming conflict at the intra and inter clan level by addressing historical grievances and root causes of conflict has led to a gap in the overall peace and statebuilding process of the country.

In recognition of this gap, LPI and its local partner Somalia Peace Line (SPL) carried out a project in 2009-2012 to engage clan elders in the establishment of inter-clan platforms in various regions across south central Somalia, with a specific focus on Mogadishu. Made up of representatives from the different clans in a given region, the Council of Elders would mediate and resolve conflicts across clan lines and also deliberate on access and ownership of resources, such as land and water, which are often the root causes of local conflicts in south central Somalia.

In south central Somalia, the four main clans are the Hawiye, Darood, Dir, and Digil-Mirifle, while marginalised clans, such as the Somali Bantus Madiban, and Benadiri, are also present, though with minimal socio-political clout. While the national level division of power is based on a ‘4.5 clan system’ – where the four main clans divide power equally, while the minority clans together get some seat allocations in the Parliament – LPI and SPL negotiated the inclusion of minority clans in the Council of Elders as full and justified members, alongside majority clans.

Once the council was established with the inclusion of marginalised clans, LPI and its partners provided training in dialogue and mediation to the clan elders. They provided a platform where the clan elders could discuss and jointly analyse local conflict dynamics in their region and how they can go forward in resolving them.

At the end of a series of consultations and trainings, the clan elders sat down to establish the structure of their council and its mandate. In an unprecedented move by the four dominant clans, the clan elders appointed the elder from a marginalised clan as the Chair of the Council, noting that this move should serve as a sign of their full commitment to the mandate and purpose of the Council. Quoting the example of Yussuf from the Quran – who was sold to slave traders by his brothers, only to later become a king and deliver his brothers from the famine plaguing his homeland – the Council appointed a head from a minority clan as a first step to reconciliation and a redress to how these clans were previously marginalised.

The inclusion of minority clans and the appointment of the chair from a minority clan is not only symbolic but also has a substantial practical return to minority communities, who for a long time were denied space and recognition. The SPL-LPI example therefore highlights how, although inclusion of minority and marginalised groups and suppressed narratives into formal processes is a challenge, it is a necessary component of strategic peacebuilding, which can be reached at through negotiation, advocacy and continuous engagement.

## C. The advocacy – peacebuilding nexus

In order to understand how advocacy can be integrated in peacebuilding, we need to unpack the different dimensions of conflict and of peacebuilding.

### 1. The levels and dimensions of conflict and conflict transformation

Conflict can occur at different levels and in different forms. It can have its sources in an issue, in a relationship, a sub-system or system as depicted in the diagram below. In systemic thinking, which conflict analysis often needs to be seen under, these different levels and dimensions are interlinked. For example, a conflict over an issue might be symptomatic of a broken relationship, which might also be a result of an oppressive system (be it cultural, political or other). Therefore, it is important to note that the different aspects of conflicts are interlinked rather than occurring in silos.

In each level, conflict can have different dimensions too<sup>8</sup>:

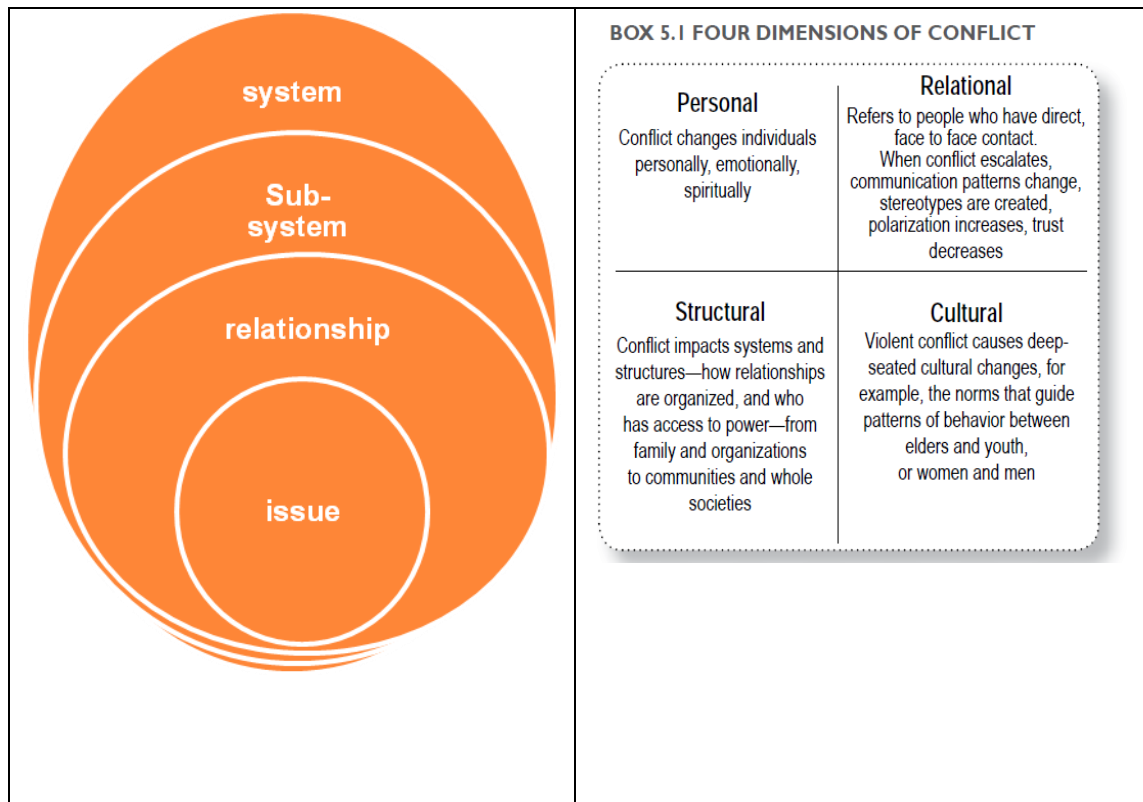
- **Personal dimensions:** Change personal beliefs, sentiments etc.
- **Relational dimensions:** People's relationship with each other changes as a result of conflict. Stereotypes, misconceptions and distrust are pervasive.
- **Structural dimensions:** Affect group relationships, power dynamics. Have to do with equality, fairness, participation, access to processes, institutions (formal and informal), systems in the society.
- **Cultural dimensions:** As a result of accumulative personal, relational and structural changes, conflict affects social dimensions, for example, status of elders, relationship between men and women etc. Because culture influences and is integrated in every sector of society, the cultural dimensions of conflict are reflected in the personal, relational and structural dimensions too.

---

<sup>8</sup> Culbertson, H., Lederach, J. P. & Neufeldt, R. (2009). *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Tool Kit*, Kroc Institute & CRS, p. 18.



Conflict transformation is built on the premise that changes across those levels and dimensions need to occur in order for nonviolent relations, peace and justice to prevail.



**Figure 2: A Nested Theory of Conflict<sup>9</sup>/Four Dimensions of Conflict<sup>10</sup>**

## 2. Dimensions of advocacy in peacebuilding

While peacebuilding can strive to mend the different dimensions of conflict (personal, relational, structural and cultural) using different strategies, advocacy can particularly be used to transform structural and cultural conflicts. Indeed such conflicts are often so deeply entrenched and engendered over a long period of time that a single policy may not effect the change needed right away. However, the contribution of policies in setting norms and transforming structures, institutions and cultures over time is undeniable.

Overall, how and when advocacy could be a resourceful and effective peacebuilding tool also depends on the *types of change*<sup>11</sup> sought:

<sup>9</sup> Dugan, M. (1996). A Nested Theory of Conflict. *Women in Leadership* 1. Vol 1, July 1996, pp 9-20.

<sup>10</sup> Culbertson, H., Lederach, J. P. & Neufeldt, R. (2009). *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Tool Kit*, Kroc Institute & CRS, p. 50.

<sup>11</sup> Jones, N., & Villar, E. (2008) ‘Situating children in international development policy: Challenges involved in successful evidence-informed policy influencing’, in *Evidence and Policy*, vol 4, no.1: pp 53-73.

- **Attitudinal change:** raising awareness on an issue, bringing it to the agenda, trying to change the attitude of stakeholders.
- **Discursive commitments:** affecting language, promoting recognition of specific groups or endorsement of international declarations, for example, gender patterns calling for a more inclusive and disaggregate language as opposed to using ‘mankind/men/people’ to refer to men, women, boys and girls.
- **Procedural change:** trying to change spaces, environments and processes through which policy decisions are made, for example, influencing who gets to sit at the decision making table.
- **Policy content:** legislative change, for example, the adoption of the Kenyan National Peace Policy.
- **Behaviour change:** change in the behaviour and action of stakeholders, for example, stigma against the mentally ill.

## D. Challenges in advocacy for peacebuilding

As previously mentioned, one of the sources of reluctance among peacebuilding actors to engage in advocacy is because of the risks of advocacy in politically or socially sensitive environments, which is characteristic of places where peacebuilding is needed in general and the HoA in particular.

In the literature review, and in consultation that LPI has had with HoA based civil society organisations, the following seem to be the major areas where the challenges of advocacy for peacebuilding are strongly felt:

### **On inclusivity**

Getting all actors to be involved in the peace process is often times challenging, where one actor could reject the participation of another actor. Participants from LPI’s workshop on advocacy peacebuilding mentioned the challenges of including women in decision making as a shared challenge across the region. In patriarchal societies, elders might reject the participation of women in formal decision making as they consider them to be incapable of representing community voices. As a result, advocacy messages elicited from such communities might be oblivious to the needs to women. Similar restrictions could apply to social groups which yield less power, such as women, youth and minority groups (for example, ethnic, sexual, or religious).

Inclusivity can also be a challenge in advocacy project planning and implementation. Further, practically speaking, ensuring the full participation of partners or beneficiaries and other important stakeholders in the conceptualisation and implementation of the advocacy project is needed to ensure the legitimacy of the advocacy message. It is also an ethical component of peacebuilding advocacy, where the very essence of peacebuilding advocacy should not only look at the policy result but also to the process. Hence, how to go about inclusivity of major stakeholders requires a more particular attention in peacebuilding advocacy than perhaps other types of advocacy. The need for inclusivity highlighted, it is, however, important to indicate the challenge: how do we make the process comprehensive, representative and authentically

participatory without undermining the efficiency and timeliness of the advocacy undertaking? – as inclusion of diverse actors requires consensus building, effective coordination and also time.

Addressing some of these questions depends on how we will go about advocacy to begin with and the activities we plan to do as a result (direct engagement with policy makers? Or academic publication? Meetings? etc). Nonetheless, teams that engage in advocacy need to give due consideration to these factors. Therefore, the key here is to think not only about the most strategic and timely advocacy approach but also the one that is anchored on the key principles of peacebuilding (empowerment, incisiveness, participation, etc) and that of the organisation or group carrying out the advocacy project.

### **On the advocacy agenda**

Most civil society organisations, particularly those in the global south, rely on funding from international donors to engage in community work, be it peacebuilding, development or humanitarian response. It is widely acknowledged that this reliance on external funding sources has compromised the accountability of peacebuilders and activists towards the communities they serve and made them more accountable and sensitive to the needs and requests of their donors.

Further, this international funding regime has also created a trend in advocacy (peacebuilding or otherwise) where organisations follow the latest funding ‘fad’, that is, the latest topic that is of interest to donors and that can get them the funding needed to run their organisation. This was documented in LPI’s one-year long mapping of peacebuilding actors in the HoA and also shared by peacebuilding CSOs that participated in the workshop on peacebuilding advocacy that LPI organised. They mentioned how advocacy agendas are no longer driven by the real and expressed needs of civil society constituencies but rather by funding. Indeed, it seems like CSOs are now going where the money is rather than to communities they serve, to seek what should change and how.

In the peacebuilding advocacy workshop that LPI organised, organisations coming from Kenya shared this sentiment. As a country with a vibrant civil society, CSOs in Kenya are numerous, well organised, active and openly engaged in advocacy, even in confrontational and public manners. The peacebuilding CSOs, however, explained how several civil society movements and social media campaigns withered after a short period of time and the donor agenda shifted to other topics. For example, from election violence, to gender, to youth and violent extremism.

While this is neither unique to Kenya nor harmful in and of itself, the key here is to balance activism with addressing root causes, so that activism and advocacy on a given topic do not become a public sensation for some time without significant influence on the lives of people.

Further, organisations should continuously assess their accountability towards their constituencies and be true to the needs of those they claim to represent. This is particularly pertinent in peacebuilding, where accountability and sensitivity to the needs of constituencies is a vital principle.

## Who should advocate?

There are two points that should be raised under this:

*1. In terms of representation and accountability:* Are we advocating for, with or through (empowering those affected by the situation to advocate for themselves)?

While the answer to this question depends on the nature and mandate of the organisation, it also raises some philosophical and practical questions. One, in advocating *for* some value or others, do we need to gain the support of those we advocate for, or can we go ahead as long as we have sufficient evidence and ‘universal’ principles that support our claim? This is an interesting question especially when analysing the relationship between local, national and international organisations where values and cultural contexts might not be in alignment.

While there is no one ‘right’ answer to this question, the advocacy team should reflect and discuss it before going ahead with the advocacy project, for it influences the strategy of the advocacy but also because it raises a vocations question.

*2. In terms of organisational arrangements:* Is it the programme team who also does the peacebuilding work on the ground or external expert advocates (a separate advocacy department/section/programme etc) that should do advocacy in an organisation?

This might be a real question for small organisations with few human resources and not a lot of experience in advocacy. The answer of course depends on the nature and experience of the advocating organisation. But in general, programme staff is better aware and more knowledgeable about the reality on the ground and hence would be better positioned to send the ‘right’ message. However, they may not have the time or the skills to work on advocacy projects that arise in addition to other peacebuilding activities. In this case, experts might come to their assistance, and the programme team and the advocacy team can work together. The key here is to think who would be better equipped to push the agenda forward.

## On advocating in a ‘zero-sum’ environment

In conflict settings, especially where there is a ‘zero-sum’ mentality, where one actor believes that the elimination of the other is the only way forward, our advocacy and engagement with one actor can easily be perceived as being partial. While this is a broader problem in peacebuilding in general, what makes advocacy different is that it might entail more public presence and call for more concrete steps forward, which might fuel the zero-sum mentality of the context.

Violent conflict often fuels zero-sum environments, which leads to the risk that engaging with actors at any side of the conflict may easily be seen as support to that side and hence as partiality. There is extensive experience in innovative conflict transformation through dialogue, using impartial and respected social or religious elders as mediators or using moderate actors from the spectrum of actors in all sides of the conflict as entry points<sup>12</sup> in such contexts.

---

<sup>12</sup> Lederach, J. P. (1997). *Building Peace. Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. United States Institute of Peace.



While some of these approaches can still come in handy when choosing to use advocacy as a strategy for conflict transformation, lessons learned from peacebuilding organisations working in volatile environments, such as South Sudan and Somalia, suggest that informal advocacy might be a great way to manoeuvre over the suspicion and perceptions of partiality that are prevalent and might be further accentuated in such contexts<sup>13</sup>.

Informal advocacy, where there is less documentation, low profile meetings that are more impromptu than planned ahead of time, and minimal to zero public or media based advocacy, are sometimes looked down upon. The approach is often disregarded as a sign of lack of capacity or a symptom of disorganisation. As experiences from peacebuilding organisations working in Somalia and South Sudan show, sometimes engaging informal advocacy creates tensions between local organisations and their international partners or between country programmes and their headquarters. While international partners might often prefer formal advocacy (for monitoring, transparency and accountability reasons and also because it is more familiar), attempting to engage in formal advocacy in such contexts is sometimes not only ineffective but could also be risky for local staff.

### **Some examples and lessons learned from peacebuilders in Somalia**

The Somalia team which works in a typically zero-sum environment discussed how impartiality and advocacy can go together in similar settings, for peacebuilding purposes.

Impartiality being one of the driving principles of LPI anywhere, the team said that it is in fact this very principle that encourages them to advocate for inclusive processes and seek engagement with all concerned parties. While impartiality does not discriminate between actors, it can be an active impartiality rather than an indifferent or passive one. The team also had the following inputs:

- a. Don't take sides with conflict parties.
- b. To the extent possible, engage all actors across divides.
- c. State 'the facts' in an unbiased manner ('dispassionate analysis') and frame it from a peacebuilding perspective.
- d. Manage 'external' perceptions – anchoring what we are trying to say with key stakeholders, having channels of communication to clarify etc.

### **Advocacy in informal spaces**

Another reality that is often mentioned by peacebuilding organisations operating in the HoA (but also rings true to others in much of the continent) is the importance of relationships in advocacy. Formal or informal, most advocates and peacebuilding practitioners highlight how important it is to develop personal and organisational relationships with those we want to influence and target.

While the value of relationships is well understood in advocacy in general and in the rest of the world as well, what makes this context special is the fact that these relationships and how they

---

<sup>13</sup> This was gathered at two workshops that LPI conducted, first with partners working in Somalia in October 2015 and the second one in a similar workshop conducted in December 2015, with the participation of around ten peacebuilding organisations in the Horn of Africa.

are fostered occur more frequently in informal spaces than in formal ones. Relationships are fostered over tea and informal gatherings or at cocktail parties and get-togethers in the capitals and then later formalised (through Memorandums of Understanding, formal meetings etc). As long-time peacebuilding practitioners and advocates shared during workshops organised by LPI, most often than not, much of the deliberation, agenda setting and decision making occurs in informal spaces and are then finalised through formal meetings and documents.

While this might be seen just as another way of how advocacy works in this setting, it presents a challenge to organisations that are not physically/geographically proximate to these informal spaces and policy circles (e.g. far from the capitals where decisions are made). It also creates a policy environment that lacks transparency and that relies heavily on organisational funding, charisma of staff etc, rather than merits. This can therefore create an uneven playing field for organisations and encourage the formation of ‘cliques’, where all parties are not welcome.

### **On accountability**

Issues of accountability are also tied to legitimacy and impartiality. Why and how do we engage in advocacy? Are we driven by the values of the organisation or do we rely on research? For example, if our research findings contrast to or are different/far from the interest of the organisation, which one do we follow? At a time when most local peacebuilding activities and advocates are supported by external funding (donors, usually international), are we advocating because there is money available to do so, because our donors’ strategic priority wants us to, or because our research and experience on the ground calls for it, regardless of the interests of donors?

One very crucial consideration in peacebuilding advocacy is the do no harm approach. While all types of advocacy should ideally be conflict sensitive, peacebuilding advocacy should be more than conflict sensitive and contribute to peace writ large. This means that in peacebuilding advocacy, peace itself is the ultimate goal, and success does not stop at achieving the immediate outcomes of the advocacy project.

In peacebuilding advocacy, an advocacy message should be carried out if and when it promotes peace in the short and long term and not because the issue itself merits advocacy. It is also the case that the process of advocacy (the manner in which it is carried out, such as ensuring inclusivity, speaking for/with primary stakeholders, etc) is as important as the desirable end result. In other words, peacebuilding advocacy, unlike other fields, such as human rights advocacy, is more about bringing about peace than speaking out on a worthy cause.

Another element of accountability in peacebuilding is accountability to peace itself. This vocation that most peacebuilders and peacebuilding organisations uphold can come in conflict with the demand for justice in transition countries. This presents a very well known tension between peacebuilders and rights activists, where rights activists accuse peacebuilders of being slow to hold individuals accountable for their deeds for the sake of ‘maintaining peace’. Peace is indeed founded on justice, and accountability for past deeds goes a long way in sustaining peace. However, in the extremely challenging and dangerous environment where peacebuilders work, the challenge is in the *when* and *how* justice can be integrated in peacebuilding.

Therefore, the accountability of advocacy for peacebuilding is not only to the mandate of the organisation and the needs of its local partners or ‘beneficiaries’ but primarily to the peace itself.

## On advocacy in ‘small spaces’

How do we operate in areas where engaging with certain actors might have legal ramifications?

This relates to the ‘diminishing space for civil society’ conversation that has started in the peacebuilding work in general, where the voice of civil society is regulated through legal and structural (invisible) mechanisms. Addressing this challenge requires an optimistic, ‘the glass is half full’ mentality where civil society should think of innovative ways of engaging in ‘small spaces’<sup>14</sup>.

For example, in 2009 the Ethiopian government put in place the Ethiopian Charities and Societies proclamation, which limited the participation of civil society organisations with external budgetary support of more than 10 per cent from engaging in human rights, good governance, peacebuilding and other thematic areas. As a result of this proclamation, several locally registered civil society organisations dissolved or changed their programmatic areas, and many more INGOs left the country. LPI Ethiopia, on the other hand, decided to stay and engage with those that were mandated as well as exempted to work on these thematic areas, particularly Ethiopian universities and local peacebuilding organisations (Peace and Development Center).

In collaboration with these entities, LPI spearheaded Sustained Dialogue – a peacebuilding approach that brings students of diverse cultural and religious backgrounds together to discuss the issues that cause tension and sometimes erupt in violence, on campus. The process first started with the Addis Ababa University in 2009-10 and later in Jimma (2014) and Haremaya Universities (2013). While the process has only been going on for eight years, recent studies and the feedback it has gotten from the university students and administration show that sustained dialogue in Ethiopian universities has been a successful peacebuilding methodology<sup>15</sup>.

## On resistance

Often, especially in peacebuilding, part of or the sole purpose of advocacy could be to amplify marginalised narratives and perspectives. But the dominant narratives may not want to hear the voices of the marginalised and might resist it. Some of the common types of resistance and possible ways of overcoming them are discussed below<sup>16</sup> in different ways:

- a. **Shelving:** This is a form of resistance where the advocacy objectives and proposals are accepted but deferred to a later time under the pretext of priority, ripeness, budget etc. One way to deal with this can be to seek alternative ways: an alternative audience that has the power and interest to make change happen or to seek out influencers and opinion shapers who can come on board with our advocacy objectives and help us counter the pretexts for shelving in a constructive way.
- b. **Lip service:** This is when there is an agreement on the proposed change but little action in effecting the change. While this can be due to limited resources, lip service can also be a systematised way of resistance, where the audience attempts to confuse the type and

<sup>14</sup> Too little or enough. Peacebuilding in small spaces. *New Routes*, 1/2013. Life & Peace Institute.

<sup>15</sup> *Six years of Sustained Dialogue in Ethiopian Universities*. Life & Peace Institute. December 2014.

<sup>16</sup> *Learning & Information Pack. Process and advocacy skills for gender mainstreaming*. 2001. UNDP Gender in Development Program, pp 21-69.

level of change you are seeking. For example, citing higher level changes (legal) that are not well implemented and hence do not trickle down, or confusing change at the level of welfare with change at the level of empowerment.

- c. **Compartmentalisation:** This refers to issues which we believe are cutting across disciplines, sectors or thematic areas etc, but which decision makers or those in power might decide to put in just one box. A good example is gender equality, which in principle should be a societal issue (not a women's issue) and relevant for every sector of the society (not just the women's and social affairs department). However, in reality it is often compartmentalised as a women's only issue, relevant for the women's affairs' committee.

In order to counter this, our advocacy project should first highlight the link between our advocacy project and the mandate or the interest of the audience or decision makers we are approaching. But politics being politics, this may not always work. Another complementary approach could be to look for and engage with potential connectors (individuals, influencers etc) that can help us bridge the compartment we are likely put under and the wider/other audience we want to reach.

- d. **Tokenism:** In this form of resistance, the decision maker or audience already has a 'representation' from the marginalised group or narrative we are supporting. This 'representative' would be an individual, an institution or a framework that the decision maker has put in place to demonstrate that they have taken our concerns 'seriously', while in effect the representative does not show a lot of agency or lacks genuine and broad support from its constituency. A good example is 'civil society' partners that are always invited for high level policy meetings and serve as a façade for civil society participation in decision making.
- e. **Investigatory diversion:** This is a common mode of resistance when the audience, the decision maker or the power holder questions the value added or effectiveness of our proposal and hesitates or refrains from taking action with the claim that they "don't know enough about the problem" (a statement which is always true about almost all problems)<sup>17</sup>. In advocacy, if you have made it this far, this is good progress. While this can be expected when the proposed policy message is novel or previously untested or proven (which is not uncommon in social innovation and engineering), it can easily lead to shelving unless we are able to provide further evidence, clarification, proof, solid risk analysis or a pilot project that can support our cause.

---

<sup>17</sup> *Learning & Information Pack. Process and advocacy skills for gender mainstreaming.* 2001. UNDP Gender in Development Program, p 22.

## Section III: Designing peacebuilding advocacy strategies

---

When organisations engage in advocacy, how they develop their advocacy strategy and identify their organisational positioning in order to design their approach to the engagement is highly influenced by what they believe is the path to change. They often ask themselves how they can effect change in a given policy environment, on a given topic, and the answer to this is based on their ‘theory of change’ or what they think – based on their experience, mandate, specificities of the topic etc – is the best way to effect change.

Although these considerations are organisation and issue dependent, the processes and steps of formal policy advocacy are rather general. Therefore, the content of this section is divided into two. The first part deals with organisational positioning by outlining the different theories that exist on how to bring about change and then also discussing the different advocacy approaches and strategies available for each approach. The second part discusses the different steps and tools used in advocacy programming.

### A. Peacebuilding advocacy: organisational positioning

#### 1. Theories about how change happens

In addition to understanding the different possibilities or approaches to advocacy, organisational positioning and strategising for how and with whom to engage in advocacy and how to design an advocacy project can benefit from understanding the different theories of how change happens.

The Center for Evaluation Innovation has a brief that summarises ten different theories, gathered from different disciplines, on how change occurs. Below is a description of four of them and how they relate to peacebuilding advocacy:

1. **Large leaps theory:** Postulates that change happens in ‘leaps’ when an issue is defined differently or when new angles of the same issue gain traction. In addition to new perspectives on the issue at the issue defining stage, this theory postulates that large-scale changes or ‘leaps’ would need the participation of key stakeholders and a broader reach to the general public. The combination of these three elements (new angles, key actors, broader reach), the theory goes, is the key to effecting large scale changes.
2. **Policy windows theory:** This theory favours timely advocacy interventions on issues that are already on the agenda, when the opportunity for intervention and input comes up. According to this theory, change occurs when a general recognition of the problem, an evidence based ‘solution’ to the problem and the political will and salience needed to make the change converge. In other words, the advocacy should come in with viable recommendations at a time where a problem is well recognised and defined and there is a significant level of interest from decision makers to the public to act on the issue. In this way, the policy windows approach to advocacy is opportunistic, that is, it waits for opportunities rather than creates them through other strategies.
3. **Coalition theory:** The general sense behind this theory can be summarised by the saying “the more, the merrier”. According to this theory, change occurs when there is a critical mass with a common value set or belief in a policy issue and can stand together towards a

common cause. The coalition theory explains why, for example, there are several peacebuilding and advocacy networks in different regions (for example, West African Network for Peacebuilding). The Kenyan National Peace Policy case study given in the previous section was also carried out through a network of peacebuilding organisations.

4. **Power politics theory:** This theory posits that power is in the hands of the few who have it or are close to those who have it. According to this theory, a more pragmatic way of effecting change would be targeting the few in power or those around them. While this theory has value in peacebuilding advocacy by allowing peacebuilders to narrow their audience, focusing on those that already have power could reinforce the power structure of a given context and sustain power asymmetries that generate or contribute to structural violence (exclusion of certain groups, cultural oppression etc). Therefore peacebuilders should combine the idea behind this theory with that of the 'grassroots theory' (which relies on groups of people at grassroots level as opposed to elites to make change), be sensitive to the power dynamics at play and look into how 'power have nots' can also be empowered to be in the decision making circle, if not at once, over time.

While these theories are distinct, they are not mutually exclusive. Organisations can pick and choose their theories of change based on the specific context at hand.



## Matrix of Theories

	THEORY (Key Authors)	DISCIPLINE	HOW CHANGE HAPPENS	WHEN THIS THEORY MAY BE USEFUL
GLOBAL THEORIES	Large Leaps or Punctuated Equilibrium theory (Baumgartner & Jones)	Political Science	Like seismic evolutionary shifts, significant changes in policy and institutions can occur when the right conditions are in place.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Large-scale policy change is the primary goal</li> <li>You have strong media-related capacity</li> </ul>
	Policy Windows or Agenda-Setting theory (Kingdon)	Political Science	Policy can be changed during a window of opportunity when advocates can successfully connect two or more components of the policy process (e.g., the way a problem is defined, the policy solution to the problem, and/or the political climate of their issue).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You can address multiple streams simultaneously (e.g., problem definition, policy solutions, and/or political climate)</li> <li>You have internal capacity to create, identify, and act on policy windows</li> </ul>
	Coalition Theory or Advocacy Coalition Framework (Sabatier, Jenkins-Smith)	Political Science	Policy change happens through coordinated activity among a range of individuals with the same core policy beliefs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A sympathetic administration is in office</li> <li>You have a strong group of allies with a common goal</li> </ul>
	Power Politics or Power Elites theory (Mills, Domhoff)	Sociology	Policy change is made by working directly with those with power to make decisions or influence decision making.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have one or more key allies in a position of power on the issue</li> <li>Focus may be on incremental administrative or rule changes</li> </ul>
	Regime Theory (Stone)	Political Science	Policy change happens through the support and empowerment of policy makers by a close-knit body of influential individuals.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You know or suspect that a coalition of non-politicians is deeply involved in policy making</li> <li>You have access to or can become part of this coalition or regime</li> </ul>
TACTICAL THEORIES	Messaging and Frameworks or Prospect theory (Tversky & Kahneman)	Psychology	Individual's preferences will vary depending on how options are presented.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The issue needs to be redefined as part of a larger campaign or effort</li> <li>A key focus of the work is on increasing awareness, agreement on problem definition, or salience of an issue</li> </ul>
	Media Influence or Agenda-Setting theory (McCombs & Shaw)	Communications	Political issues on the public's agenda will depend on the extent of coverage a given issue receives by mass news media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have strong media-related capacity</li> <li>You want to put the issue on the radar of the broader public</li> </ul>
	Grassroots or Community Organizing theory (Alinsky, Biklen)	Social Psychology	Policy change is made through collective action by members of the community who work on changing problems affecting their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A distinct group of individuals is directly affected by an issue</li> <li>Your organization's role in an issue is as a "convener" or "capacity-builder" rather than as a "driver"</li> </ul>
	Group Formation or Self-Categorization theory (Turner, Tajfel)	Social Psychology	Policy change can be achieved when individuals identify with groups and subsequently act in a way that is consistent with that social group or category membership.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You are looking to build or tighten your base of support</li> <li>Cohesion among your organization's members is a prerequisite for change</li> </ul>
	Diffusion theory or Diffusion of Innovations (Rogers)	Sociology	Change happens when a new idea for a program or policy is communicated to a critical mass, who perceives it as superseding the current policy/program (or lack thereof) and thus, adopts the idea.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The focus is on a new idea for a program or policy</li> <li>You have trusted messengers and champions to model or communicate the innovation</li> </ul>

Table 2: Matrix of Theories<sup>18</sup>

## 2. Policy influencing approaches

Once we know the change we seek, there are different approaches to *how* we engage in policy influence/advocacy/policy engagement:

### Style/tone

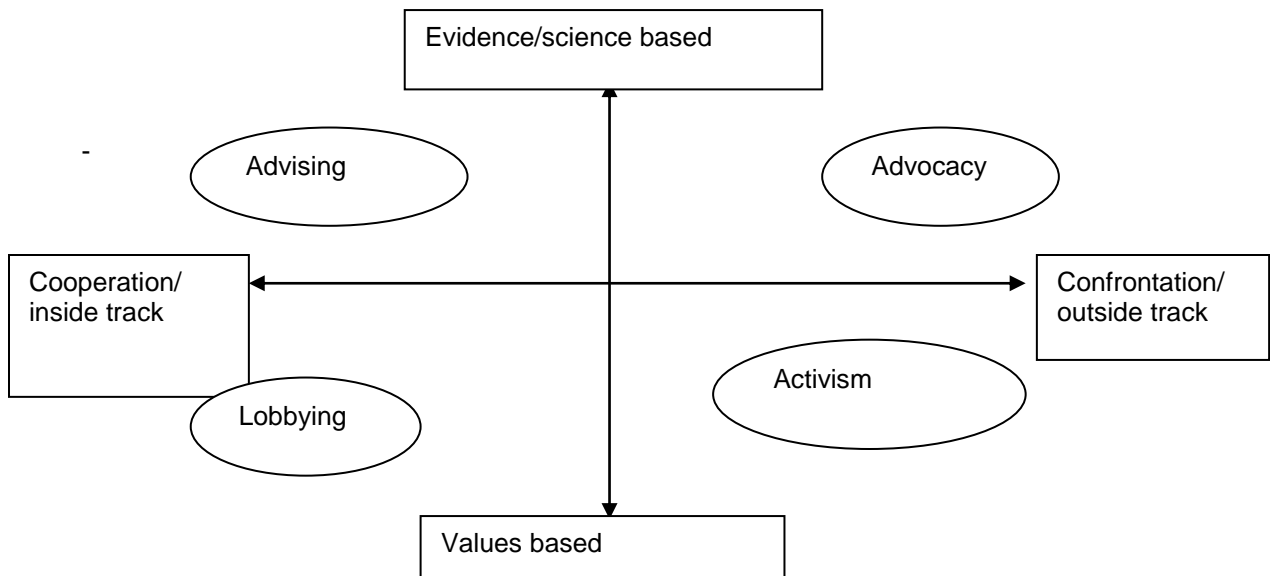
- a. Inside track – working closely with decision makers
- b. Outside track – change through pressure and confrontation

<sup>18</sup> Stachowiak, S. (2013) *Pathways for Change: 10 Theories to Inform Advocacy and Policy Change Efforts*. Center for Evaluation Innovation, p 3.

## Rationale

- a) Evidence led – this is what most research organisations would do. For example, when an organisation advocates on climate change based on data on the global increase in temperature or sea levels, and calls for better environmental policies, using the data as a base and the framing as unsustainable and destructive current practices.
- b) Values/principles led – religious institutions, humanistic organisations often use this. For example, when an organisation advocates for better environmental protection based on a ‘we are caretakers of Mother Earth’ (they may or may not use data to back their framing. They often do, but the emphasis is still on our custodianship of the earth and nature, as human beings. This is a more values led advocacy.

Depending on the topic at hand, the advocacy initiative can be both values led and evidence led. They are not independent or exclusive of each other. The following figure represents the above concepts<sup>19</sup>:



**Figure 3: Values led and evidence led advocacy initiative**

**Advising:** Think tanks are sometimes commissioned to investigate a certain policy question. Even when commissioned, there is a process of selling the ideas developed through research to the decision makers.

**Media campaigning:** In addition to their direct engagement with decision makers, some organisations also use public media to put pressure on governments/decision makers. This is

<sup>19</sup> Start, D. & Hovland, I. (2004). *Tools for Policy Impact. A Handbook for Researchers*. Overseas Development Institute, p 5.

more common with watchdog organisations, such as International Crisis Group and Human Rights Watch. A good example of this type is the joint advocacy and campaign by Oxfam, Amnesty International, International Action Network on Small Arms towards the adoption of an international treaty for the regulation of arms trade by way of the International Arms Trade Treaty adopted in April 2013 in the UN national assembly, with 156 votes in favour, 3 against and 23 abstentions<sup>20</sup>.

**Lobbying:** Face to face meetings with decision makers or influencers around them. While the word ‘lobbying’ is associated with special interest groups, for multinationals and actors in the private sector that want to influence decisions that affect them (not the general public or social interests) lobbying can be used to influence decisions that affect the general public as well. In fact, in most policy settings lobbying through personal relationships, informal networks or formal yet established relationships is how most policies are influenced.

**Activism:** Petitions, public demonstrations, commonly used by organisations with a certain value set (Greenpeace held a rally around the global climate change summit in 2014). While activism can help mobilize popular support and show the level of support behind a certain agenda, it has to be complemented with other advocacy tactics, such as lobbying, before it can result in substantive changes in the form of a policy change, legislative change or something similar.

While most organisations don’t strictly fit into one or the other quadrant, it is quite common to use different approaches depending on the issue at hand, organisational competence, risk, resources and strategy. Most organisations use a combination of approaches to achieve their goals.

## **B. The advocacy process and peacebuilding advocacy programming**

### **1. The advocacy cycle and tools**

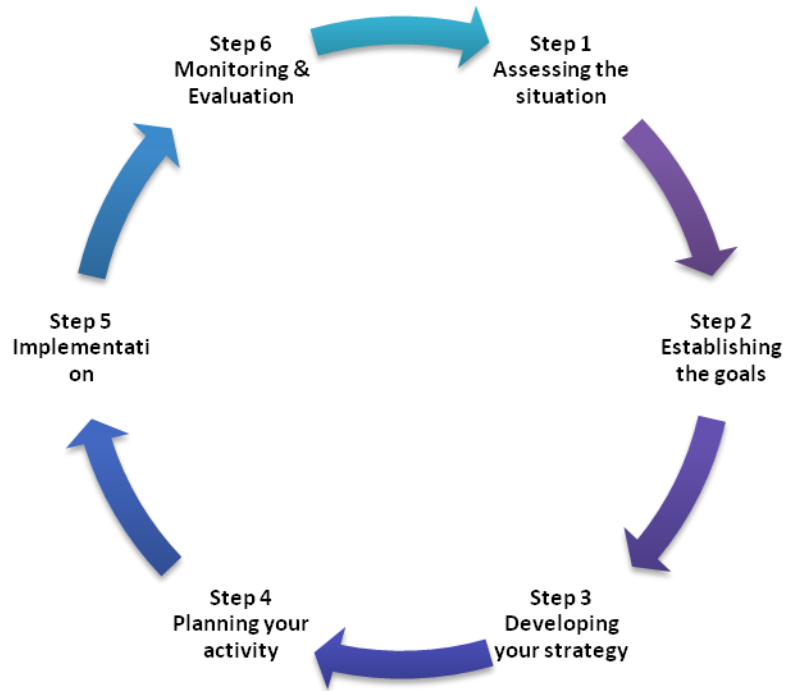
The advocacy cycle generally has six steps: Assessing the situation, Establishing the goals, Developing the strategy, Planning your activity, Implementation and Monitoring & Evaluation as illustrated below. However, depending on the advocacy environment, culture and need in a given context, one or more of the steps might be unnecessary, irrelevant or merged with other steps. Here, it is important to acknowledge that these six steps are rather ‘institutions dependent’, meaning, they assume that there are functioning institutions, recognizable and accountable actors and that decisions are based largely on evidence, though ‘politics’ might have its way. While these assumptions work for some peacebuilding actors, it is somehow far removed from the realities of actors that carry out advocacy in an environment where institutions are non-existent or dysfunctional, where actors are illegitimate and constantly change, and where decisions are made largely for political reasons and the policy environment is dominated by an often deadly zero-sum mentality. Therefore, the situation on the ground might require a different approach than the diagram suggests.

A good example that illustrates some of the points stated above come from LPI’s partners in Somalia. In a consultation on advocacy for peacebuilding they shared that their role as civil society organisations and advocates goes beyond launching evidence based and strategic

---

<sup>20</sup> [https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms\\_trade\\_treaty](https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/arms_trade_treaty)

advocacy projects to also implementing the very policy messages it advocated for, since the government or the necessary audience may not have the capacity or resources to implement the changes they have accepted as necessary. Hence, they would have a seventh step where they have to bring their advocacy message from paper to practice. Further, the Somalia partners also reflected that as learned from LPI Somalia partners, the advocacy cycle in Somalia might have a eighth step where, after monitoring and evaluating the result of the advocacy project, the advocacy group would have to look for a means of implementation.



21

**Figure 4: The advocacy cycle**

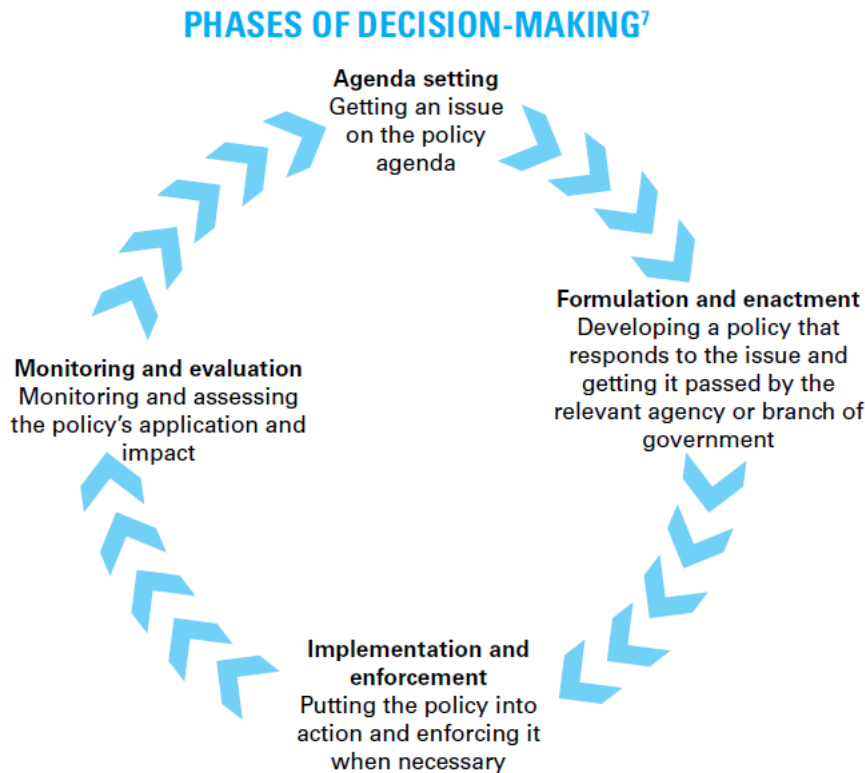
### **STEP ONE: Defining the problem**

Do the facts speak for themselves?

*“There’s a world of difference between truth and facts. Facts can obscure the truth.”* Maya Angelo

Different people can look at the same “facts” and deduce differently, take away points and make different decisions. Hence, how well we are able to interpret the facts, how clear we are on the ‘lens’ with which we look at the problem and distinguish our point of view from others’ points of view or the status quo is the first thing that determines whether or not we get the attention of our target group.

<sup>21</sup> SaferWorld & Conciliation Resources (2011). *Advocacy Capacity Building. A Training Toolkit*. People’s Peace Making Perspectives Project, p 4.



**Figure 5: The decision making cycle.<sup>22</sup>**

In the agenda setting stage or problem identification, it is important to be clear on (explicitly state) what we are aiming to do, especially in relation to the decision making cycle:

- **Awareness raising on a new issue:** Do we want attention on an issue that policy makers were oblivious of? So are we hoping to influence the ‘agenda setting’ stage of decision making?
- **Reframing of an existing issue:** Are we saying the problem is not how it is previously defined but should be seen in a different light? Reframing an existing issue in peacebuilding works well to draw attention to the “root causes”, while the mainstream perception could overlook root causes and focus on symptomatic expressions of root causes. For example, violent extremism could be blamed on religious radicalism, while the more profound cause could be historical marginalisation and youth unemployment.
- **Alternative perspective:** When we agree on the agenda and the definition of the problem, the objective of an advocacy project could also be to influence the approach taken to mitigate a given problem. For example, if land and resource sharing is the cause of a problem, while the state might be tempted to militarise the area to prevent an

<sup>22</sup> Miller V. & Kane C. (1997). *Advocacy Sourcebook: Frameworks for Planning, Action and Reflection*. Institute for Development Research.

outbreak of violence among the different groups, peacebuilders can advocate for community dialogue as an alternative approach to mitigating violent conflict.

- **Presenting an alternative process:** When we agree on the issue and the proposed solution but differ on the process of operationalising the solution. For example, we agree that “bottom-up approaches” could be the solution to addressing gang violence in a given community. But if by “bottom-up” decision-makers understand that government officials at the local level are the ones to participate and make decisions, we can differ on that and claim that doing so could be “elitist” in a way that does not address the primary perpetrators and victims of the violence. We can then vouch for a “real” community participation, where representatives of different groups are the ones to participate and decide on what to do to address the problem, hence participating in the implementation stage of the policy cycle.

### **Tools for agenda-setting and defining the problem**

In peacebuilding, especially in complex settings, we often come across numerous themes and questions that have policy implication and would be better addressed if there was some change at the mid-higher decision making levels.

However, time may not be ripe and resources may not allow us to work on all of these issues; hence, we’d need to prioritise and select one topic that we are best suited to advocate on given our expertise, resources, mandate, or the environment around us etc.

Issue selection can be “demand driven”, where the request for engagement comes from a decision maker/influencer, in which case they might already have the issue they need input on. LPI HARP’s (Horn of Africa Regional Programme) engagement with CEWARN (Conflict Early Warning and Response Mechanism) is not a typical but close example of a demand driven issue selection, where CEWARN, LPI and other partners collectively identified a policy issue to work on.

Another feature of a “demand driven” advocacy is when an issue is already on the agenda and the advocacy project wants to make a contribution on that topic. Another LPI example is when LPI DRC and HARP engaged with the UN Special Envoy to the Great Lakes, Mary Robinson, where she requested for civil society engagement in the implementation of the Hope framework for the Great Lakes, and LPI prepared a policy brief and held subsequent meetings to influence the issue.

However, advocacy can also be “supply-driven”, where the need for advocacy on a certain issue is informed by research or experiences from the ground. This approach often requires that the advocacy project itself works on creating a momentum for the issue to be recognised as important. It might require the project to put as much energy on drawing attention to the topic and putting it on the agenda as getting it adopted (and acted on) by decision makers. This is typical of civil society organisations worldwide.

Some examples of a supply driven advocacy include the Global Arms Control Campaign led by Oxfam, Amnesty International, and International Action Network on Small Arms in 2011-2013, the idea of microfinance and the Grameen Bank, which started in Bangladesh, facilitating loans for the “poorest of the poor”. While in the first example (the global arms control campaign), the issue is somehow always on the agenda of decision makers for its link with state security, the



latter example (Grameen Bank) was an innovation of its own, which gave a different perspective on who is loan worthy.

While it is easy to identify which policy question a team would like to work on due to the timeliness of the issue, or the urgency of the situation on the ground, a policy window, a request from a decision maker (when commissioned or demand driven advocacy, where the advice of the advocating organisation is requested) or a sole mandate of an organisation etc, in most cases peacebuilders have a couple of issues on their agenda that can benefit from advocacy. In cases when it is not very clear which issue the team would like to work on (mostly relevant for supply-driven advocacy), the following tools can be used as a step by step guide how to identify the most appropriate issue to work on.

### 1. Tools for issue selection

The following are factors that the team should think about in order to ‘rate’ the ripeness of one issue over the others, when there are multiple issues on the agenda that require an advocacy intervention. Using these factors, the team can either brainstorm the palatability of each issue at hand or score/rate them numerically on the individual basis, to arrive at the one or two issues that are the most appropriate themes to work on.

Organisational identity and strategic priority

- Legitimacy and capacity of LPI or partners
- Actionability
- Likelihood of success
- Potential risk
- Timing
- Convincing research/evidence

A practical tool to identify the issue that we are at a good position to raise at the policy level is:

	Theme 1	Theme 2	Theme 3
Organisational Identity			
Legitimacy			
Actionability			
Success			
Risk			

<b>Timing</b>			
<b>Evidence</b>			
<b>Sustainability</b>			
<b>Impact</b>			
<b>Total</b>			

## 2. SWOT/BEEM analysis

Once the theme is identified, then SWOT/BEEM analyses are useful tools to understand the capacity of the organisation (the advocacy team) and the external opportunities and threats. It offers a good opportunity for a group reflection, where the team can assess its current standing or potential to work on the issue. The following is a SWOT/BEEM table

<b>internal</b>	<b>Strengths</b>	<b>Build</b>
	<b>Weaknesses</b>	<b>Eliminate</b>
<b>External</b>	<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Exploit</b>
	<b>Threats</b>	<b>Minimise</b>

Once we know the internal capacity of the organisation or our partners and discuss some of the anticipated opportunities and threats and how to address them, the next thing is to define exactly what the problem is. The problem tree is a tool to help us analyse and disaggregate the complexity of the problem.

## 3. Understanding the problem: Problem Tree

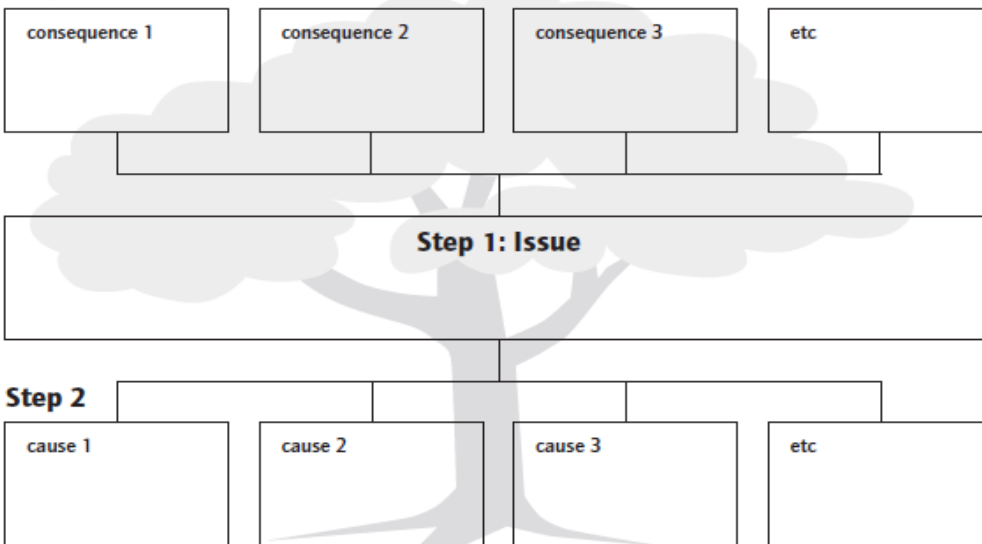
The first step on using the problem tree is to write it on the trunk of the tree and ask why that problem came to be. By continuously asking why to the whys, the root causes (which are written on the roots of the tree) are identified.

Once that is sufficiently exhausted, then the next step is to identify the consequences by asking “so what”. This exercise would help us understand the relationship between the causes and consequences of the issue we are trying to tackle.

There is a general bias in the literature and practice of advocacy to do address the ‘causes’ of a problem rather than its consequences, “symptoms”. Indeed, doing so would have a higher possibility of setting a capacitating environment for other changes to occur as a result and has a better chance of effecting a long-term impact. However, it is also possible and sometimes necessary to advocate on how the ‘symptoms’ or consequences should be addressed. In fact, in some cases, addressing the consequences and how they are dealt with can be the only way civil society can influence decision making.

## Problem Tree

### Step 3



## STEP TWO: Establishing the goals

- Advocacy goal (or vision of success): general, bigger picture.
- In identifying our advocacy objectives, we’ll go from the general to the specific
- The objectives (or outcomes) should be very clear and specific and point to the higher
- Level changes in policies, position of policy makers etc. that we aim to achieve with the engagement. Issues such as “gender, governance, immigration etc” – are generic and will be considered “noise”, unless well defined. One has to be able to underline what about “gender” or “governance” is problematic, missing, etc. and what needs to be changed.
- Policy makers are very action oriented, while peacebuilders tend to be process oriented. Policymakers don’t do well with ‘food for thought’, so want clarity and specificity.
- The key is to present ‘simplicity on the side of complexity’: simplify the complexity without oversimplifying/reducing the issue at hand.

Often the SMART approach is used as a guiding tool for developing objectives: Specific, Measurable, Actionable, Realistic and Time specific.

In a policy engagement, decision makers would not only expect us to show them what the problem is, our points of convergence or divergence (as discussed in the issue identification step), but they would also expect us to be clear on our proposed recommendations for change. So in terms of implementation, what is it that we are asking to be done? What is the outcome we seek from this engagement? The following three are possible outcomes to expect<sup>23</sup>:

- **Content:**

Is the change we seek in terms of a law, or policy or budget? Are we calling for a law to be introduced or altered, or a budget to be allocated for an already existing policy/law?

- **Structure:**

Are we calling for a platform to be set up? For existing structures to change their current practices or for new ones to be set up?

- **Culture:**

Is it the values and behaviours of people we want to change? Do we want to raise awareness on an issue? Values and behaviour are influenced by religion, custom, class, gender, ethnicity and age. Are these the kinds of things we want to reach out to and influence in order to see the change we seek?

## **Tools for establishing the goals**

From the problem and solution tree, the goals (the vision of the policy initiative) and the objectives (specific outcomes) are drawn.

Now that the problem is well defined, what do we want policy makers or influential actors to do about it? What are we suggesting will make a difference? To answer these questions, the solution tree is a helpful tool.

### **1. Solution Tree**

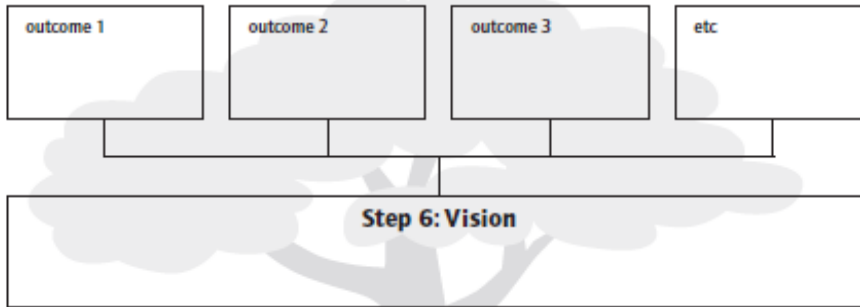
As a tool that immediately follows the problem tree, the solution tree starts with participants identifying a “solution” to every identified problem (in the roots of the tree). So at this stage, the leading question is *What is the “solution” to every identified problem?*

---

<sup>23</sup> Adopted from VeneKlasen, L. & Miller, V. (2002) *A new weave of power, people and politics: the action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, p 170, World Neighbors; and Schuler, M. (ed.) (1986), *Empowerment and the law: Strategies of Third World women*. Washington D.C.: OEF International.

## Solution Tree

### Step 5



### Step 4



Then the participants would move into identifying the outcomes of every solution, which would be the reverse of the consequences of the problems identified in the problem tree.

The solutions that come out of the solution tree can be numerous. However, since we can't present all of them in one initiative, we would have to narrow down or prioritise the solutions. While the prioritising can easily be achieved through brainstorming with the team members, there are other tools that can be used to guide the process. The following is a simple tool for solution ranking/prioritising.

## 2. Ranking solutions

Participants list the “possible solutions” that they are suggesting and analyse each one based on its impact, prospect of success, organisational rationale/capacity, external rational/external challenges or opportunities. In a small group, plenary or individual basis, participants give scores of 1-10 for each factor and the “Solution(s)” with the highest score is/are chosen as recommendations for the policy engagement.

Possible solutions	Potential impact	Prospect of success	Internal rationale	External rationale	Total

It should be noted, however, that the ranking of “solution(s)” is only useful when the policy engagement is on an existing policy, structure or framework, which the policy initiative believes needs to be altered. If the policy initiative is trying to introduce a new policy (for example, a

peace education curriculum where there is none), then these factors and the table should be used as a tool to help participants analyse why the suggested solution is important. These factors should then be used to assess the rationale behind the policy issue at hand rather than selecting the ‘solution’ to be recommended per se. In cases like the latter, this tool can be useful to further dissect and understand what it is the team is advocating for and strategise how to go about it.

For example, the tool can be used to decide whether the peace education should be for primary school students, in the formal or vocational educational sector, as an integral element of the whole education system or as a subject. It might also be a combination of some of these possible ‘solutions’ based on the four factors highlighted in the table above.

From the problem and solution trees, the goals (the vision of the policy initiative) and the objectives (specific outcomes) are drawn.

Because it is not enough to identify the problem and have the appropriate responses to these problems in mind, the group should brainstorm the level, type and actor of change needed:

- At what level of change? Local, national, regional, international?
- What kind of change? Policy, practice/behaviour/action, awareness/attitude?
- Who needs to change? Institutions, individuals, groups?

	Local	National	Regional/global
Problem, causes and consequences			
The change that you seek			
Who needs to change?			

Based on the analysis from these exercises and tools, you can formulate:

- **Goal:** Overall purpose highlighting the kind of change and the agent (the “what” and the “who”)

*Examples:* “Improve healthcare for children in area X”

“Ensure that women are more fairly represented in decision-making”

“Challenge corruption in public life”



○ **Objective (or outcomes):** the specificities of the goal. It should be SMART:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Relevant
- Time Specific

*Example:* to increase the number of women participating in village committees in a particular area by 20 per cent in two years

### **STEP THREE: Developing your strategy**

The strategy development stage is where the team discusses how it will meet its objectives (how will it get from the objective to the action) or results. The team strategises on ‘how to make it happen’ from the conceptual level. It analyses and strategises how to make use of the nature of the audience, the allies and opponents in play, the messenger of the policy project etc. Here the question is “What can I do in order to send my advocacy message well and effectively?”.

- “Know thyself but know thy audience even better”
  - Who is your target audience, that is, the individuals or organisations whose perspectives, behaviours and actions you want to influence? Study them at the organisational and personal levels.
  - Know their needs, interests and positions, “interest based bargaining”:
    - need: why they want what they really want
    - interest: what they really want
    - position: what they say they want

Often, the position of an audience can be influenced if you manage to address their interests and needs. Alternative ways of addressing their interests and needs (than their current position which they believe will address them) is one way of winning the audience to your side. Similarly, the same approach can also be pursued with opponents, who, if convinced, can strengthen our message (more support can mean more weight).

- Who are your indirect audience: influencers
  - The straightway may be the shortest way in physics, but it may not be effective in advocacy. It might be more reasonable and often more feasible to reach targets through influencers (people and organisations around them) rather than direct interaction.
- Who are your allies? Who can support you?
- Who are your opponents and what are their arguments? What is your counterargument to their proposal? Are you ready to address their concerns (their needs and interests that go beyond the positions they stand by or advocate for)?

- What approach (see previous section on Policy Influencing Approaches) will the policy initiative take: ‘inside track’ (non confrontational) or ‘outside track’ (confrontational, campaigning and activism)?
- Who is the messenger? Not only the logic and evidence behind your message, but the person who conveys the message also matters. In fact, the messenger can be the leverage point where you get the attention, interest and will of the audience in favour of your message.

In order to answer these questions and understand the relevant actors and how your advocacy will engage with them, you can make use of a stakeholder mapping and influencers’ map.

## **Tools for developing your strategy**

### **1. Stakeholder mapping and analysis**

**Stakeholders are people who have something to gain or lose through the outcomes of the advocacy or the process.**

- **Identifying stakeholders:**
  - Who are directly affected by the problem?
  - State actors (local, national, regional, international)?
  - Non state actors (local, national, regional, international internal, external stakeholders)?
- **Categorising stakeholders:**
  - Who are the targets (the actors whose positions you want to change or who you want to take action)?
  - Who are the beneficiaries (the stakeholders that would feel a positive change due to a change in policies)?
  - Who are the opponents (those who are also engaged in the issue but resist the change)? and
  - Who are your allies (those who share your vision)?
- **Understanding the stakeholders:**

When analyzing stakeholders, it is also important to pay attention to the power dynamics at play. In peacebuilding, it is very common to understand power as it *should* be but in Utopia, “i.e., power should belong to the people or to those who are legitimately elected to office etc”, and to neglect or reject the power that is in those who actually call the shots with or without the legitimacy from the people. While the rationale behind this approach is understandable, complete rejection of power or avoidance of the powerful can contribute to powerlessness. In a pragmatic world (where the ideals are still present), we should understand that whoever has power can make change – positive or negative change. Hence, power should be well understood, and the

powerful should be skilfully engaged in order to ensure that power is used for peace and the general good.

Therefore, the general sense among civil society that power is inherently corrupt and the closer one gets to power, the more likely one is to be co-opted is not always constructive. The leader of the American Civil Rights movement, Martin Luther King Jr., was among the important global social justice activists and icons who argued for more power to challenge power. As he said, “Power without love is reckless and abusive and love without power is sentimental and anaemic”. The trick therefore is to know how to balance the ideal with the reality and power with the positive application of it.

In the ‘Action guide for advocacy and citizen participation’<sup>24</sup>, the authors highlight four distinctions about power:

- Power *over*: This is the most recognised form of power and a form that a lot of activists and communities fight against. The expression of ‘power over’ comes in terms of repression, coercion, discrimination etc, where those in control of power and resources (politically but also socially due to gender roles, age differences, ethnicity, legacy etc) use it *over* those that do not have these powers and privileges.
- Power *with*: This type of power “has to do with finding common ground among different interests and building collective strength”. ‘Power with’ is different actors putting together their principles, convictions and capabilities to act.
- Power *to*: This is the power or the ability of each individual to make decisions about their lives. At the individual level, the ‘power to’ of every individual can be combined to create the ‘power with’. It is the potential in every person (realised or not).
- Power *within*: Power within “is the capacity to imagine and have hope; it affirms the common human search for dignity and fulfilment”.

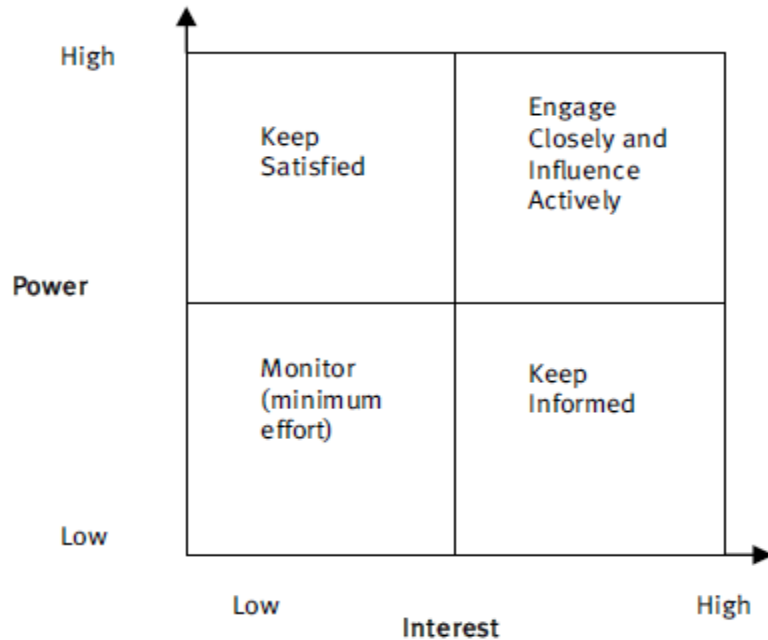
In order to be effective, we should look at our stakeholders’ power over the issue and their ability to effect change, as well as their interest on the issue. Those with a great level of power but low interest in the issue maybe could persuade and be persuaded, whereas those with a high level of power and interest can be either the target audience or direct ‘opponents’ that we should watch out for/engage with.

- Interest on the issue<sup>25</sup>
- Power over the issue

---

<sup>24</sup> VeneKlasen, L. & Miller, V. (2002, rev 2007). *A New weave of power, people & politics: The action guide for advocacy and citizen participation*, Chapter 3, Power and empowerment. Practical Action Publ.

<sup>25</sup> Start, D. & Hovland, I. (2004). *Tools for Policy Impact. A Handbook for Researchers*. Overseas Development Institute, p 27.



### Defining the actors

<b>Target</b>	
<b>Beneficiaries</b>	
<b>Opponents</b>	
<b>Allies</b>	

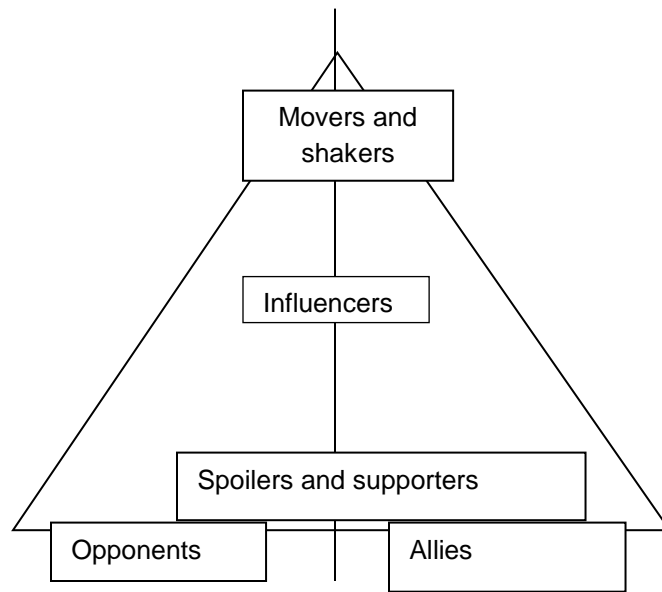
Once actors are identified, it is important to study the interests of each actor and understand their position on the issue as well as consider what their position on our proposed policy message/proposal could be. The following are questions that help in analyzing the actors:

- Of the actors identified, who are the most influential?
- Who, if supportive of our initiative, can help us effect a greater change?
- Who are those that could react negatively to our initiative?
- How do we account for the concerns and interests of those that may not be supportive?

<b>Influence/ Power</b>	<b>High</b>	Opponents			Allies
	<b>Medium</b>				Allies/influencers
	<b>Low</b>	Potential spoilers			Keep informed
		<b>Strongly opposing</b>	<b>Opposing</b>	<b>Supporting</b>	<b>Strongly supporting</b>
	<b>Position on issue</b>				

We might not want to work with those who have a high level of influence and are supportive of our initiative. But we can also decide to engage with those who can give us strong support but are not very influential. We can, for example, use these actors to access those that are highly influential. Depending on the issue, the need, our level of access to the actors, the basic interests involved etc, we could work with any of the actors in any of the quadrants. The purpose of this tool is to help us think in categories. We might also want to add the opponents.

The idea behind stakeholder mapping and understanding the positions and interests of stakeholders is to know beforehand how each actor might react to our proposal and to respond to that in an appropriate manner. It will help us in packaging, framing and communicating parts of the processes. In peacebuilding this is very important, because those who feel excluded from the process or who have a strong opposing position and who also have power can use this as a pretext to “spoil” or work against our proposals. We do not want to disenfranchise, especially when we advocate for inclusive peacebuilding.

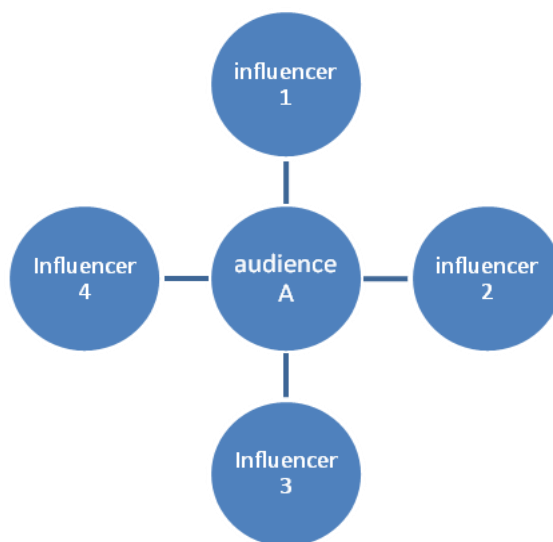


**Figure 6: Stakeholder mapping**

**2. Identifying and mapping influencers**

**a) Understanding our targets and the influencers around them**

The purpose of this brainstorming exercise is to identify the influencers around our targets and to see if we have networks and access to these influencers, so that we can reach out to our targets through those around them (the influencers).



**Figure 7: Influence map**

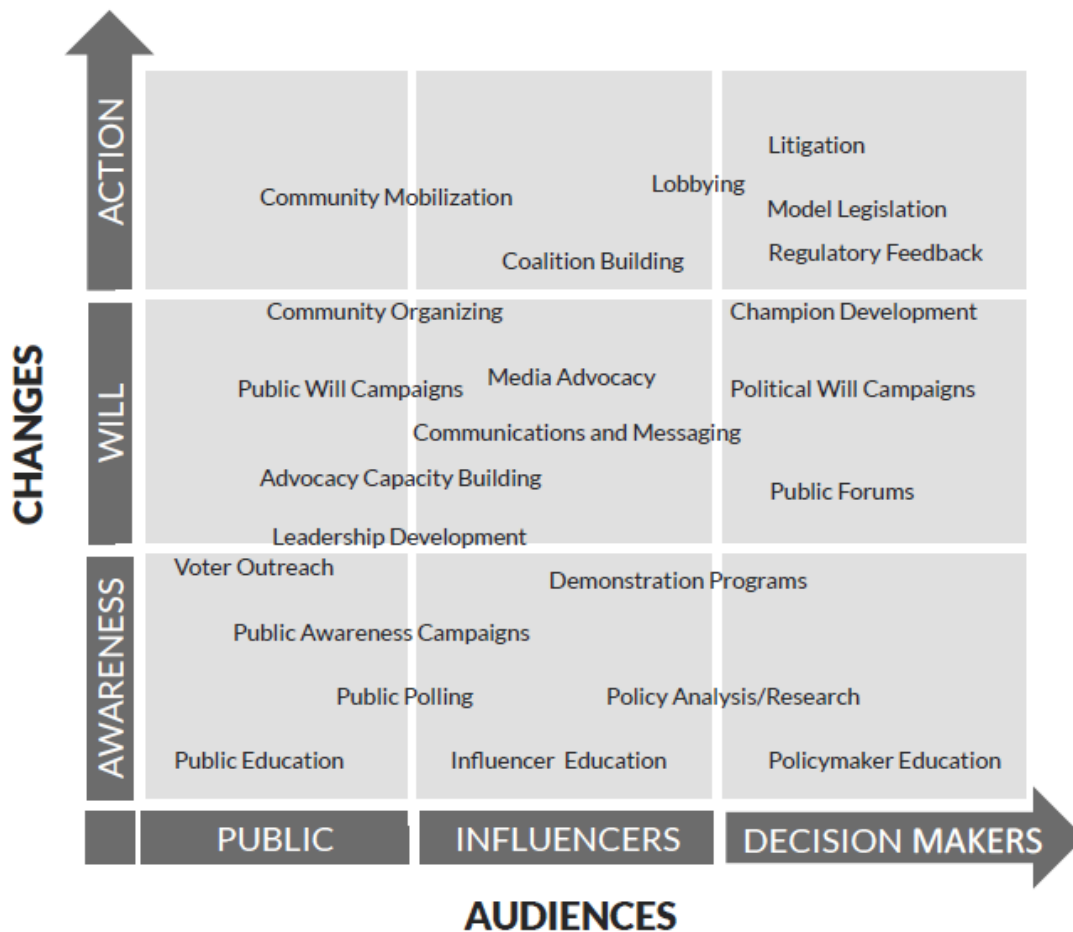




- Contingency plan: is there a plan B to your plan A?
- Is the advocacy initiative a short term or long term endeavour? Will there be different phases? What are the activities anticipated and who is responsible for which activity? What is the time line, budget etc?

### Common types of advocacy activities

Once an advocacy message is articulated, the strategy is developed, the planning and the carrying out of activities appropriate for the target audience and the kind of change we seek is essential. The following diagram displays some effective advocacy strategies, depending on the change sought and the target audience.



**Figure 8: Advocacy strategy framework<sup>26</sup>**

While these strategies are possibilities, each should be weighed for its benefits and drawbacks and appropriateness in the given context. For example, media advocacy, community mobilisation and campaigning may be confrontational in a way that is destructive in politically fragile or

<sup>26</sup> Coffman, J. & Beer, T. (2015). *The Advocacy Strategy Framework. A Tool for Articulating an Advocacy Theory of Change*. Center for Evaluation Innovation, p 2.

sensitive settings. This is particularly relevant and true in peacebuilding advocacy, where advocacy can easily be politicised and where civil society organisations and groups would have to advocate/operate under ‘zero sum’ environments. For example, in a workshop that LPI conducted with around 10 peacebuilding organisations in the Horn of Africa participants in Sudan and Ethiopia mentioned how such confrontational strategies would be ineffective in their setting. Participants from South Sudan shared that media advocacy would be ineffective in their context, as decision makers often do not use social or print media, while the general public has limited access to the different forms of media.

That said, by way of clarifications, it is important to define/identify who the different types of ‘audience’ are in the diagram and what the different types of ‘change’ entail.

- **Public** – the people that are agents of their own and can effect change by themselves or by influencing the decision makers that represent them. While policy advocacy seems to target social or political decision makers only, peacebuilding often entails empowering people. Therefore, peacebuilding advocacy, unlike other types of advocacy, should not just look into who currently has the power to effect change (which would reinforce asymmetric power relations), but also interrogate how to alter prevailing power dynamics, so that those without power are empowered to yield influence on matters that concern their lives.
- **Influencers** – people or institutions that do not have the final say on the matter but because of their connection or nature/role can influence the thoughts and actions of decision makers. Political advisors, opinion leaders, religious leaders and media are examples of influencers.
- **Decision makers** – people/institutions that have the final say on the matter. They are the government officials, judges, elected administrators, community elders, religious leaders, etc.

## Tools for planning an advocacy activity

### 1. Risk analysis and management

Although the team should do some thinking on possible risks that come with working on the selected topic when doing the SWOT analysis, it is important to think more about it at the stage when the issue is more defined, the actors, region, approach, activity etc. are more detailed than when they were doing the SWOT analysis.

The following tools can be used to think about ways of preventing, mitigating or managing some of the anticipated risks.

Risk	Ways of reducing risk	Agent/person responsible

## 2. Means of communication

Another element of the advocacy activity planning stage is *deciding the means of communicating* the policy message to our target, deciding the approach of the initiative etc. For example, are we doing a media campaign, calling for vigils, lobbying, having a round table meeting with important actors?

In addition, this is also the stage to do make the *practical planning*: time table of activities, division of labour among team members, developing a results framework, budgeting etc.

**Table 3: Advocacy Methods adopted from Tearfund 2002<sup>27</sup>**

Method	Common use	Examples
Networking	Long-term advocacy activity When you do not have the skills or strength	Meeting with community leaders E-mailing Attending conferences
Lobbying	When you have influence on the target The target is open	Meetings Phone calls Briefing Public meetings
Raising awareness	When public opinion matters To give weight to the issue	Training Community meetings Posters and leaflets
Mobilising	When target is swayed by public opinion To add weight to your recommendation.	Letter writing Rallies

<sup>27</sup> Gordon, G. (2002). *Practical Action in Advocacy: Advocacy Toolkit*. Tearfund.

Media	When there is no access to policy makers To reach those outside the area	Press release to newspaper Press statement
-------	---	---

## STEP FIVE: Implementation

This is the step where the organisation actually conducts the advocacy activities such as:

- Meeting: lobbying
- Mass media campaigns: activism
- Publications: advising

In any of the above and other means of implementing the advocacy project, the following three points are important:

- **Simplicity** – just one message (having 2-3 central messages), but having one overarching message is still crucial.
- **Repetition** – repetition lends itself to memorisation or ‘take-home’ messages that are really taken home ;) but it can be a link line between repetition for memorisation and repetition and redundancy. One needs to be skilful and crafty here.
- **Corporate identity** – visual characteristics such as logo, typography, tone, style and even the face of the campaign (although this has an organisational/programmatic risk, in case the actual person leaves, for example) will help the target make the connection every time.

The above three principles<sup>28</sup> are more relevant but also apparent in the increasingly digitalised world, where campaigns and advocacy projects often put social media into use. In the age of Facebook, Twitter, Youtube, Instagram and others, the idea of simplicity (hashtags for example), repetition (retweets, Facebook sharing etc) and visuals are essential in mass mobilisation and in the effort to make policy messages catchy so they ‘stick’ with decision makers and/or the public.

The challenge with these principles for peacebuilders is how to be simple without being simplistic, given the complexity of the situations we often deal with. Here, peacebuilders are encouraged to get out of their peacebuilding lingo or thinking and try to be in the shoes of their primary audience: how do they think, how do they usually understand their environment and how can we frame our thinking and policy message in a way that is communicable to them. Peacebuilders should be aware of the fact that their way of thinking, their common sense and their ‘duh’ moments may not necessarily ring true to others who work in different sectors. Hence, it is essential to be aware of the differences in mind-set across sectors and cultures and strategise on how to send the policy message in a way that considers these differences.

---

<sup>28</sup> Start, D. & Hovland, I. (2004). *Tools for Policy Impact. A Handbook for Researchers*. Overseas Development Institute.

The following are some ‘tips’ that might be useful for preparing a policy brief and a face to face meeting, as these are the two widely used modes of implementing or delivering a policy message.

### **1. Face to face meeting**

- Do some research on your target: interest, position on issue
- Understand your target’s mandate, power: what can they do?
- Be clear on your objective and ‘action points’
- Demonstrate logic and highlight the evidence behind your recommendations
- Be succinct, direct and clear and not confrontational
- Reiterate their comments, appreciate and add on or suggest alternatives
- Mention allies
- Prepare and take a material outlining your issue and arguments
- If in a group, discuss roles beforehand – who should say what before
- Follow up with a thank-you email and keep them in the loop

### **2. Policy brief**

- The policy brief should be SMART; it should state:
  - What is the problem?
  - Why is it important? And why is it important now?
  - What are your recommendations?
  - Which among your suggestions are most important to the audience, and how would you frame your recommendations with the interests or mandates of your target actor?
- What is your evidence, theory of change and credibility?

## **STEP SIX: Monitoring and Evaluation**

### **Key questions for decision-making:**

- What happened to your input?
- Can you provide further support to those who want to adapt some of your recommendations?
- Are there other opportunities to reinforce your message? Can you use other ways to achieve your goals?
- What have you learned from the process – what worked and what did not?
  - Organisationally
  - Process wise

**APPENDIX B**  
**DEFINITIONS OF INTERIM OUTCOMES AND EXAMPLE INDICATORS**

INTERIM OUTCOME	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE INDICATORS
<b>Changed Attitudes or Beliefs</b>	Target audiences' feelings or affect about an issue or policy proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of audience members with favorable attitudes toward the issue or interest</li> <li>Percentage of audience members saying issue is important to them</li> </ul>
<b>Collaborative Action Among Partners</b>	Individuals or groups coordinating their work and acting together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New organizations signing on as collaborators</li> <li>Policy agenda alignment among collaborators</li> <li>Collaborative actions taken among organizations (e.g., joint meetings, aligning of messages)</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Advocacy Capacity</b>	The ability of an organization or coalition to lead, adapt, manage, and technically implement an advocacy strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increased knowledge about advocacy, mobilizing, or organizing tactics</li> <li>Improved media skills and contacts</li> <li>Increased ability to get and use data</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Knowledge</b>	Audience recognition that a problem exists or familiarity with a policy proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of audience members with knowledge of an issue</li> <li>Website activity for portions of website with advocacy-related information</li> </ul>
<b>Increased or Improved Media Coverage</b>	Quantity and/or quality of coverage generated in print, broadcast, or electronic media.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of media citations of advocate research or products</li> <li>Number of stories successfully placed in the media (e.g., op-eds)</li> <li>Number of advocate (or trained spokesperson) citations in the media</li> <li>Number of media articles reflecting preferred issue framing</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Political Will or Support</b>	Willingness of policymakers to act in support of an issue or policy proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of citations of advocate products or ideas in policy deliberations/policies</li> <li>Number of elected officials who publicly support the advocacy effort</li> <li>Number of issue mentions in policymaker speeches (or debates)</li> <li>Number and party representation of bill sponsors and co-sponsors</li> <li>Number of votes for or against specific legislation</li> </ul>
<b>Increased Public Will or Support</b>	Willingness of a (non-policymaker) target audience to act in support of an issue or policy proposal.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of audience members willing to take action on behalf of a specific issue</li> <li>Attendance at advocacy events (e.g., public forums, marches, rallies)</li> </ul>
<b>New Political Champions</b>	High-profile individuals who adopt an issue and publicly advocate for it.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New champions or stakeholders recruited</li> <li>New constituencies represented among champions</li> <li>Champion actions to support issue (e.g., speaking out, signing on)</li> </ul>
<b>Stronger Coalitions</b>	Mutually beneficial relationships with other organizations or individuals who support or participate in an advocacy strategy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number, type, and/or strength of organizational relationships developed</li> <li>Number, type, and/or strength of relationships with unlikely partners</li> </ul>
<b>Successful Mobilization of Public Voices</b>	Increase in the number of individuals who can be counted on for sustained advocacy or action on an issue.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New advocates recruited</li> <li>New constituencies represented among advocates</li> <li>New advocate actions to support issue</li> </ul>

**Table 4: Interim outcomes and example indicators<sup>29</sup>**

<sup>29</sup> Coffman, J. & Beer, T. (2015). *The Advocacy Strategy Framework. A Tool for Articulating an Advocacy Theory of Change*. Center for Evaluation Innovation, p 14.

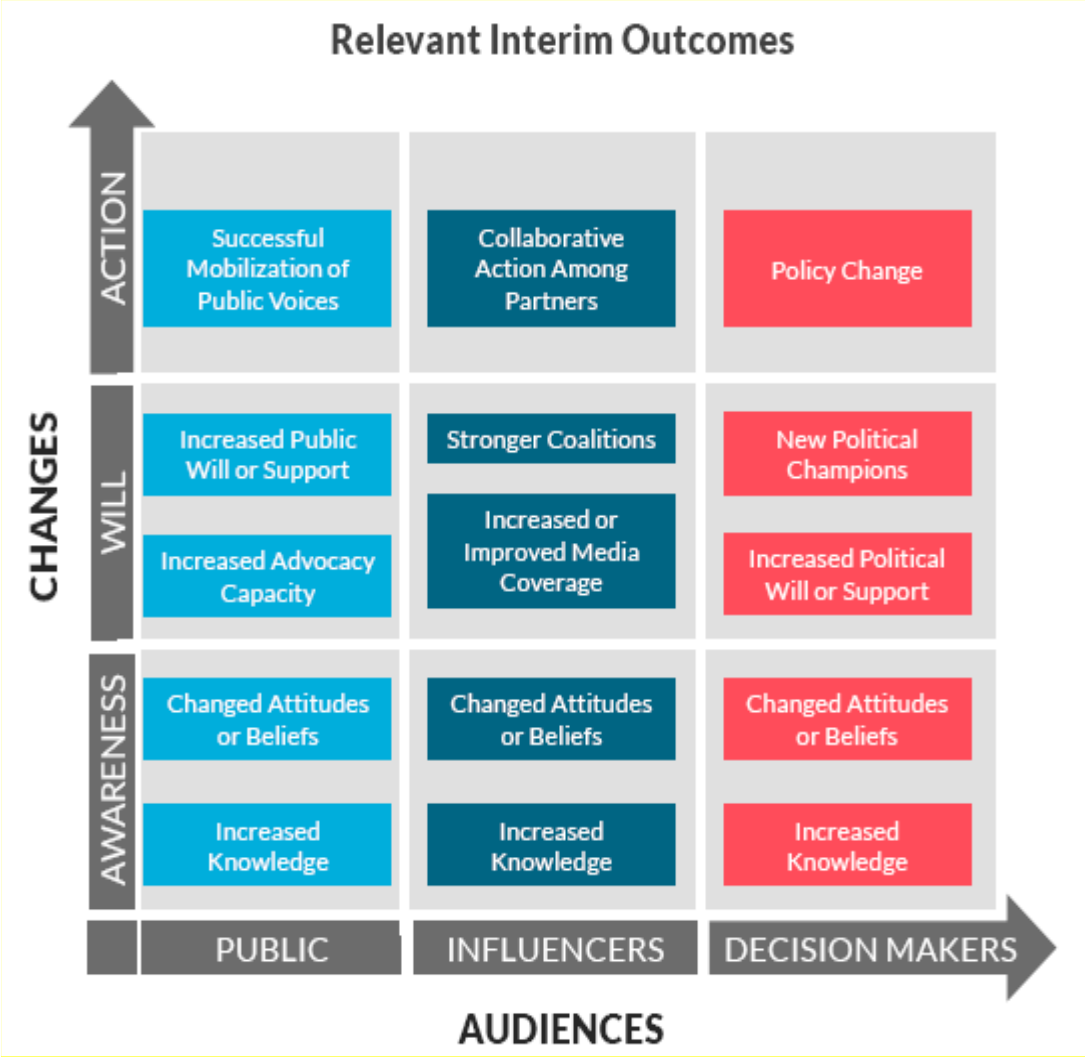


Figure 9: Relevant Interim Outcomes<sup>30</sup>

**Monitoring & Evaluation challenges and mitigation strategies**

Challenge	Strategies to address
<p><b>Attribution problem</b>            In situations where we are not the only actors working on an issue, to what extent can we</p>	<p>Focus on analysing our contribution instead, e.g. through Outcome Harvesting<sup>31</sup>. Try to understand the process of change, analyse the</p>

<sup>30</sup> Coffman, J. & Beer, T. (2015). *The Advocacy Strategy Framework. A Tool for Articulating an Advocacy Theory of Change*. Center for Evaluation Innovation, p 11.

<sup>31</sup> Outcome Harvesting is an M&E methodology that focuses on any change in the policy environment and drawing the potential contribution of our policy work to the change witnessed. In contrast to the conventional M&E mechanisms that monitor the effect of policy work to the change ‘out there’ (inductive), Outcome Harvesting looks at the change and sees how much of it we contributed to (deductive). For more information, refer to Wilson-Grau, R. & Britt, H. (May 2012, rev. Nov 2013). *Outcome Harvesting*. MENA Office. Ford Foundation.



<p>attribute the changes we see to our input? Could it be that the stakeholders themselves have come up with the ideas we also had proposed? Perhaps other actors have also advocated for the same changes?</p>	<p>influencing factors and how other actors also contributed.</p>
<p><b>No explicit (and even implicit) recognition and appreciation of our contribution</b> It is often unlikely that the audience we have engaged with will accept our proposal in its entirety. As a result, it might be difficult to trace how and to what extent and which aspects of our input that have contributed to the change we are witnessing.</p>	<p>Use influencers as data sources. Plus, we should also look at the ‘non policy’ changes that our advocacy effort has been able to effect. Coalition building, empowerment, change in awareness (not necessarily documented behaviour), raising a question, striking a conversation, etc might be more measurable changes which, even if they fall short of our main objective for the policy campaign, should still be documented.<sup>32</sup></p>
<p><b>Lack of feedback mechanisms</b> While feedback from other types of stakeholders (e.g. partners, target communities) can easily be obtained, getting information/feedback from policy makers on the performance of the advocating organisation or the policy engagement in general is often difficult. This, therefore, requires advocates and peacebuilders to find different ways of getting that information.</p>	<p>Try to extract the information from the influencers around the decision makers, if they are more accessible. Harvesting indicative information from the language or approach that our target audience has recently used can also inform our work (press release, website etc). Instead of active appraisal, look for tacit acknowledgement of a relationship or participation in communications, etc (for example, where there was no relationship before).</p>
<p><b>Capturing complex change processes that take time</b> Policy change in peacebuilding – that is, structural change – needs long-term commitment and efforts, and it may be difficult to show concrete results in the early stages of the process, which can be challenging in donor reporting.</p>	<p>Develop M&amp;E tools that capture proxy changes/outcomes, which are stepping stones towards the broader change.  Engage donors and stakeholders in your work, make them aware of the time dimension for change to happen.</p>
<p><b>Foreseeing negative consequences</b> Understanding potential negative consequences of policy advocacy, which may happen in the longer term when new policies are implemented (e.g. we advocate for land-reform, which may bring to the front other kinds of conflicts in implementation).</p>	<p>While this should be thought of in the risk assessment stage, some aspects of this can only be observed in post-effect, that is, after our advocacy. Therefore, we should always be aware of the possibility of unintended consequences that might come as a result of our initiative and be open and willing to observe and address them as they occur.</p>

<sup>32</sup> Coffman, J. (2007). What's Different About Evaluating Advocacy and Policy Change? *The evaluation exchange*. Harvard Family Research Project. *Volume XIII* (nr 1), p 3.

Sometimes, the policy change we advocated for did not come into being, not because of the lack of quality of our advocacy but because of external factors. Looking for outcomes outside the main objective of the advocacy project would help us see to what our efforts contributed to in addition to, or in place of, the primary and intended outcomes.

### Tools for Monitoring and Evaluation

However, despite these challenges, there are still some practical guidelines that can be used to track, document, and monitor and evaluate the change we contributed to as succinctly summarised by Jones (ODI, 2011).

Approach	Results (what to measure)	Tools
Evidence and advice	Outputs	Evaluating research reports, policy briefs and websites
	Uptake and use	Logs; new areas for citation analysis; user surveys
	Influence	Outcome harvesting
Public campaigns & advocacy	Target's behaviour, attitude	Surveys, focus groups, direct responses
	Media attention	Media tracking logs, media assessment
	Media framing and influence	Framing analysis; coverage
Lobbying approaches	Actors, relationships, policy processes & institutions	Recording meetings, tracking people, interviewing key informants, probing influence

**Table 5: Tools for M&E of Policy Influencing<sup>33</sup>**

<sup>33</sup> Jones, H. (2011). *A guide to monitoring and evaluating policy influence*. Overseas Development Institute.

## Section IV: Conclusion and wrap-up

---

### Elements of a policy argument :

Any advocacy project should be clear on the following three key questions:

1. **What is the problem?**
2. **What is the “solution?”**
3. **How can it be applied?**

Elements of a policy argument <sup>34</sup>	Questions to be answered
<p><i>Problem</i></p> <p><b>What is the problem, and why is it important? Now?</b></p>	<p>What is the background to the current problem?</p> <p>What is not working in the current system?</p> <p>What is the impact of the failure of the current system/policy?</p> <p>What is the evidence to the problem identified (does the problem really exist the way you are identifying it)?</p>
<p><i>Solution</i></p> <p><b>What should be done about it? And why this option?</b></p>	<p>What are the options available?</p> <p>What is the best way to go in light of the challenges?</p> <p>Why is this option the right one in comparison to other options?</p>
<p><i>Application</i></p> <p><b>How should the “solution” be realised?</b></p>	<p>What should be done to realise this recommendation?</p> <p>Who should do it?</p> <p>When should it be done?</p>

---

<sup>34</sup> Young, E. & Quinn, L. (2012). *Making Research Evidence Matter. A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries*. Open Society Foundation.



**Figure 10: Policy advocacy process in a nutshell<sup>35</sup>**

### The policy advocacy process

Step	Question	Tools	Use
<b>Issue identification</b>	What is the problem?	Issue selection table	Prioritising the issue to advocate on
		SWOT/BEEM analysis	Assessing the capacity of the organisation and external events
		Problem tree	Context analysis and understanding the problem
<b>Establishing the advocacy goals</b>	What is the 'solution'?	Solution tree	Identify possible policy recommendations
		Solution ranking	Prioritise which policy recommendations you'll call for
		SMART analysis	Decide on simple, measurable, actionable, realistic and time bound policy objectives

<sup>35</sup> Young, E. & Quinn, L. (2012). *Making Research Evidence Matter. A Guide to Policy Advocacy in Transition Countries*. Open Society Foundation.

<b>Developing the strategy</b>	How do you reach the goal	Stakeholder mapping	To know the stakeholders and understand them
		Interest & power matrix	Understand the positions and interest of stakeholders
		Power & position matrix	Assess the opponents and allies
		Influence channel	Identify influencers and decide means of influencing your audience
		Theory of change & impact ladder	Put it all together and envision your objective
<b>Planning your activities</b>	What do we do next?	Plan of action, Gantt chart, organisational processes	Plan and divide tasks
<b>Implementation</b>	<b>JUST DO IT! ☺</b>		
<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	What did we learn and achieve?	Log frame, outcome harvesting	To support your project further, plan and strategise for necessary actions to push for your point. To learn from the past and plan for the future. To pat yourself on the back and restore hope in advocacy ☺

**Notes: When the ‘voice of reason’ and the quality of the evidence is not enough:**

Sometimes, especially in policy environments where institutions are weak or more informal or even dysfunctional (and these are the environments that require peacebuilding interventions and advocacy most), it is not only the evidence behind the message the advocacy project conveys but also external dynamics that decide how successful the project can be:

- The experience and personal views of the decision makers and influencers (that is why it is crucial to understand your audience from the organisational but also personal sides).
- Resources available (factor this into your recommendations and strategy or hint into how this problem can be mitigated, if relevant for the issue).
- Prevailing political climate: what is the value-based agenda of the time? How does your issue or recommendation find its place there?
- Public or international pressure: can you mobilise some actors to join or endorse your initiative in order to create the pressure needed to ‘turn hands’?
- Habit and tradition: general practices and ways of doing things will be influential in policy change.







## Advocacy as a tool

Advocacy is recognised as an effective tool to bring about social (cultural) and political (policy) changes. While several civil society organisations world-wide have used it to advance various causes, advocacy is particularly associated with rights-based movements i.e. movements and organisations calling for human rights, gender rights and environmental rights.

Over the years, there has been an advancement in the theory and praxis of advocacy which has allowed social movements and civil society organisations to understand and utilize different tactics - including emerging tools such as social media - to effect positive change. This is particularly true with regards to advocacy resources that guide organisations working towards international development or the promotion of certain rights.

In the field of peacebuilding, some organisations shy away from using the term 'advocacy' which they consider too confrontational and replace it with other terms such as policy change, policy engagement or social transformation... - while others use "advocacy" as one of their core programmatic strategies. In sum, peacebuilding advocacy is widely carried out by most peacebuilding organisations - in varying forms and at different levels – although the theorisation and documentation of this practice lags behind.

This resource pack is therefore an attempt by LPI's Horn of Africa Regional Programme to strike a conversation on the theoretical and practical nexus between advocacy and peacebuilding. While the resource pack does not aim to answer all questions about this unique nexus, it does offer some theoretical pointers as well as practical insights from the experiences of some peacebuilding organisations on how advocacy could be used to address immediate as well as structural peacebuilding challenges.



LIFE & PEACE INSTITUTE  
KUNGSÄNGSGATAN 17  
753 22 UPPSALA  
WWW.LIFE-PEACE.ORG